

BIPARTISAN CONGRESSIONAL HEARING ON
HOW TO BRING THE TROOPS HOME

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Thursday, September 15, 2005

10:00 a.m.

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122 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C.

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[FORMER] SENATOR MAX CLELAND
GENERAL JOSEPH HOAR [RET.]
DR. KENNETH KATZMAN
AMBASSADOR DAVID MACK
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P R O C E E D I N G S

STATEMENT BY CONGRESSWOMAN LYNN WOOLSEY

CONGRESSWOMAN WOOLSEY: We're going to get started--in honor of our 10 to one o'clock timeline, and with so much to say, and so much to talk about, and in honor of those who are actually here on time.

Good morning, and thank you panelists--thank you, thank you, for being here. You make this subject we're going to talk about so very real, and so very credible. And what a difference that makes.

Thank you to my House colleagues who are here right now. You have to know they will be coming and going. The idea that we would have a Member of Congress besides myself here today for the entire time is a dream that will never happen. So they will come and go and ask questions, and sit behind us when they are waiting their turn for the questions and answers.

And thank you, every single person, for joining us today: those who are in the room--the press--thank you for being interested. Those who are in my office--you see, we're streaming video on my website, right this minute on, so people can watch it all over the country if they're interested.

And a lot of people had a hand in putting this organization together for this hearing. But first I want to single out the work of California State Senator Tom Hayden. Tom, you have such an important role in this, and I appreciate you so much; your suggestions, your push, and your grassroots leadership. Without Tom--

[Applause.]

Yes, I think we should do that.

[Applause.]

Tom Hayden has been a source of great energy and strength in the anti-war movement. We all know it. We trust his judgment, and we know when we're doing the right thing if he can come and be part of what we're doing. And I thank you.

I had hoped that today's discussion would take place under the auspices of the House Armed Services Committee, or the House International Relations Committee--because that's where it belongs. But there's been very little appetite among the Congressional leadership for open discussion about how we should end the war in Iraq.

So I've taken matters into my own hands. And, in so doing, we're going to have this oversight--in so doing we are going to go past the oversight committees--the relevant committees--and we're going to do what they are obligated to do, but what they won't do. And what we're doing, we're doing without any budget whatsoever. So--much easier if it's done the right way in the House of Representatives. But we're not going to wait for them.

There are many layers of opposition to this war, and we all know it. There are many reasons to arrive at a conclusion that it's time for our troops to come home.

Some of us have dissented from the very beginning. Some believe that the doctrine of "pre-emptive war" is inhuman and immoral. Others were shocked that the administration's rationale for war turned out to be based on dubious intelligence--at best--and outright lies, at worst.

Others became disillusioned by the Abu Ghraib outrage, or the failure to outfit our soldiers with proper body and vehicle armor.

Still others jumped off the bandwagon when it became clear that the Administration was deluding itself: deluding itself into believing there would be no insurgency, that we'd be greeted as liberators; that this mission would require only minimal manpower--and a few billion dollars.

And for some the last straw has been the blinding incompetence of the war effort: the failure to prevent looting; the failure to secure munitions site; the dissolving of the Iraqi army; the lack of an effective plan to secure the peace after the end of major combat operations; and on, and on, and on.

The reasons are varied, certainly intertwined, but the important thing is that opposition to the war now puts us firmly in the political mainstream.

Less than 40 percent of Americans--according to recent polls--approve of the President's handling of Iraq, and roughly have want to see our troops come home as soon as possible.

With this support comes some responsibility to be more than a protest movement. We must also offer sound, thorough policy proposals that could turn our deeply held convictions into operations reality.

The question for us today is not "why?" It is not the "why" of troop withdrawal. It is not the "how" about time--it's not about what time, and when. It is about "how?"

We'll here from a broad range of experts, scholars and military strategies. We'll start with an overview of the situation on the ground, including a perspective on lives of Iraqis under U.S. occupation. Later, we'll hear specifically about the ways that we can pivot away from the current policy, ending our military commitment in Iraq, and bringing our troops home. And, from there, we'll transition again into a discussion of "what next?" I've always insisted that ending the war does not, and cannot, mean abandoning Iraq and its people.

We believe in the principle underlying Colin Powell's "Pottery Barn rule"--and even if it was the Bush Administration that broke it, we believe, at the very least, that we must play a constructive role in the rebuilding of Iraq.

Most of all, the hearing is designed to inspire a long overdue national conversation about alternatives to the current Iraq policy. We want to fill the policy vacuum. We want to break the silence--the silence right here on Capitol Hill where, frankly, Members of Congress have been slow to embrace the fresh thinking and the new approaches to Iraq that their constituents are eager to hear.

For too long--for a number of reasons--this debate has been ceded to the Bush Administration--even as they have produced a bloody and ruinous debacle. In fact, on Tuesday, the Iraqi National Sovereignty Committee, an 18-member committee made up of legislators chosen in national elections in January, formally asked the United States to withdraw its troops from the country. The request consisted of a timetable for the troops to be removed, and referred to them as "occupation forces." If there were ever a clear sign that the Iraqi people want the United States out of their country, this is it.

Now, we are here, however, prepared not just to say "no" to the war in Iraq, but "yes" to a new, intelligent, progressive, peaceful Iraq policy, that will both protect the American people and fulfill our obligation to the Iraqi people.

I want, again, to thank the witnesses in advance, because their expertise and their courage will make today's hearing that something that will be heard throughout the United States of America and around the world. I thank you so very much.

Our first witness today is Dr. Kenneth Katzman. Dr. Katzman is a Senior Middle East Analyst in the Congressional Research Service in the Library of Congress--a position he has held since 1991. His areas of specialization include Iraq, Iran, the Gulf states, Afghanistan, and terrorist groups operating in the Middle East and South Asia.

Dr. Katzman will discuss facets of current U.S. policy and operations in Iraq, including the military, economic, diplomatic, political and humanitarian situation. Dr. Katzman, thank you very much for being here.

For my colleagues, and for the audience, we will not be asking questions until the entire panel has spoken.

Dr. Katzman.

STATEMENT BY KENNETH KATZMAN

DR. KATZMAN: Thank you very much, Congresswoman Woolsey. Thank for asking CRS to appear. I am appearing in an official capacity as the CRS expert responsible for Iraq and other issues

related to Iraq--neighboring countries, as well.

The statement that was issued is a cleared CRS product. It was cleared by CRS review procedures. As you know, CRS is a non-partisan agency that serves the Congress. We're sort of Congress's "think tank."

Obviously, I've watched Iraq for many years, both in this job and other jobs. So I'll just lay it out, what's going on in Iraq, how I see Iraq, how others see Iraq, and where we are in policy.

Senior U.S. officials assert that existing transition plans are proceeding and will accomplish the U.S. goals of stability and democracy, and that success in Iraq will promote democratic transformation of the Arab world. The Administration view is that the current U.S. policy course should be maintained. The pillars of current policy are to continue the political transition while building Iraq security forces that can eventually secure Iraq without outside help.

As those policies are being implemented, the Administration is maintaining about 140,000 U. S. troops in Iraq, supported by 20,000 personnel--military personnel--from 29 other countries to protect the new Iraq government from the ongoing Sunni Arab-led insurgency. The next major steps in the political transition--and which will likely test U.S. policy--are the holding of a national referendum on the draft constitution October 15th, and the holding of national elections, presumably for a permanent government, on December 15th, If the constitution is adopted, it would be an election for a permanent government.

The draft constitution was completed by the Shiite--and was declared completed by Shiite and Kurdish members of the drafting committee--on August 28th, after several extensions beyond the August 15th deadline for completion--although the negotiations of some points continued actually all the way up until yesterday, not September 8th as I have here. They continued until yesterday. However, the substantial involvement of U.S. Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad in the drafting process did not accomplish the Administration objective of ensuring Sunni Arab satisfaction with the constitution draft. Sunni negotiators, who did not endorse the draft and wanted to continue negotiating, claim their views were brushed aside by the dominant Shiite and Kurdish factions. Many Sunni negotiators--although not all--publicly denounced the draft as setting the stage for de facto fragmentation of Iraq. Sunnis are registering to vote in large numbers--85 percent in some cities--to try to vote it down on October 15th.

In a series of speeches in late August, President Bush said U.S. forces must and will remain in Iraq to help Iraqis build a secure democracy and defeat the insurgents' determination to stop democracy from taking root in the Middle East. Administration officials have not said that all insurgent violence must cease before U.S. forces could substantially be withdrawn; only that Iraqi security forces be capable of combating the violence on their own.

However, a growing number of observers--even U.S. military commanders--assert that even the 140,000 U.S. forces now in Iraq are unable to defeat the insurgency. Several U.S. commanders in Iraq, including Brigadier General Donald Alston, the Chief U.S. Military Spokesman, have asserted that the overcoming the insurgency will ultimately require a political, not a military, solution.

The resiliency of the insurgency, and the growing perception among many experts and U.S. officials that it cannot be militarily defeated at current U.S. force levels, has presented the Administration with dramatically differing force recommendations--either to increase U.S. troops or, alternatively, to withdraw U.S. troops--draw down U.S. troops.

Some believe the U.S. should increase troop strength in Iraq in all-out effort to defeat the insurgents. Those who take this view maintain that additional U.S. forces would allow the U.S. to

conduct multiple counter-insurgency operations simultaneously and prevent insurgents from re-infiltrating cities from which they have been expelled.

The opposite view is that the U.S. should begin to withdraw forces from Iraq. Some who take this position maintain that it is the continue large U.S. presence in Iraq that is inflaming the insurgency, and that a withdrawal would deprive the insurgents of a pretext to continue fighting government forces--Iraqi forces. Critics of this view--including the Administration--say that an Iraqi government might collapse if U.S. forces were withdrawn, and before the Iraqi security forces were able to secure Iraq. A collapse of the new government, in this view, would harm U.S. credibility and permit Iraq to become a haven for terrorists.

Where one comes down on this question, I think--or in my assessment--depends on your assessment of the Iraqi security forces. The cornerstone of U.S. policy is to equip and train Iraqi security forces. President Bush stated on June 28, 2005--and since--"Our strategy can be summed up as: as the Iraqi stand up, we will stand down." As of September 7, 2005, according to DoD, there are 189,500 total members of the Iraqi security forces; 75,000 operational military personnel under the Ministry of Defense, and 94,000 police-type forces under the Ministry of Interior. The total force appears to be on pace, in terms of numbers, to meet the 270,000 goal set for next July.

Raw numbers, however, might be less important than assessments of ISF commitment and performance. U.S. commanders say some ISF units are gaining in confidence and proficiency, and responsibility for security in areas of Baghdad and parts of the southern Iraq--Shiite southern Iraq--are being turned over to Iraq security personnel.

At the same times, Members of Congress who visited Iraq in June 2005 say they were told by U.S. commanders on the ground that there are really only 5,000 to 10,000 Iraqi security forces capable of independent counter-insurgent operations. Senior U.S. military personnel said, also in June, that there are about 40,000 Iraqi security personnel operational, but they require U.S. support. The remaining Iraqi security forces--this would about 140,000--are still being formed into units.

In addition, the police-related components include possibly as many tens of thousands, according to the GAO, who are absent without leave, and might very well have deserted. Some U.S. commands say that the Iraqi security personnel continue to lack an effective command structure or independent initiative; that some Iraqi forces fair or refuse on their own to forcefully combat the insurgency; and a State and Defense Department inspector general report of July 15th said that the Iraqi security forces are penetrated by insurgents. No one has quantified how many--what the percentage of insurgents might be, but it's some number above one.

The Administration and its critics appear to agree that the insurgency will ultimately be defeated only through a political settlement among Iraq's major communities, and that settlement could be achieved if the dominant Shiite and Kurdish--Shiite Islamists and Kurdish factions--in Iraq's new government cede more power to the Sunni Arabs. The Administration points to some progress in this direction--first, the addition in July of '05 of 15 voting Sunni Arabs to the constitutional drafting committee. However, should the Sunnis try but fail in the referendum on October 15th to vote the constitution down--and they need a two-thirds vote in three provinces--some experts maintain that many Sunnis will feel even more disenfranchised than they are now--than they feel now--and support for the insurgents might actually increase.

Some believe that only a major adjustment to the post-Saddam political structure would satisfy the Sunni Arabs. Many Sunnis believe that the transition road map currently under way ensures the

domination by Shiites and Kurds, to the detriment of Sunnis. However, there is little agreement on how the transition road map might be altered to satisfy the Sunnis. Many experts believe that the Sunnis would only be satisfied with their return to the rulership of Iraq.

One idea that has been advanced actually came from Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, the acknowledged leader of the Shiite community--the most revered Shiite religious figure, not only in Iraq, but even in the wider Shiite world, and who has played a key role in shaping post-Saddam Iraq. He reportedly, this summer advanced a plan to change the voting system in future elections to a district-based system, which would enable the Sunnis to achieve representation in a new political structure proportionate to their population in Iraq. Sunni Arabs would be elected from Sunni Arab districts, no matter how light the election turnout would be in those areas.

Some believe that the three major communities--Sunnis, Shiites and Kurds--will not be able to agree to share power in post-Saddam Iraq, and the country should be partitioned-- de jure or de facto. However, most experts believe that an actual partition into three separate countries would be extremely difficult, because none of these three entities would likely be able to stand alone.

On the other hand, some experts believe the three communities could reach an agreement that would provide each with substantial autonomy within an integrated Iraq--a federal Iraq--as well as agreements on revenue-sharing and participation of the three major communities in the central government.

Thank you very much.

CONGRESSWOMAN WOOLSEY: Thank you, Dr. Katzman.

And before we go any further, in case you're wondering where General Hoar is, he will be here. He won't be here until noon-ish. But he'll be here, and he will do his--he had three things to do this morning, and we're in the middle. So we're just delighted he's coming.

And now it's my pleasure to introduce Mr. Anas Shallal as our next witness. Mr. Shallal was born in Iraq, and is a Sunni Muslim. He is the founder of Iraqi Americans for Peaceful Alternatives, co-founder of the Peace Cafe, which promotes dialogue between Arabs and Jews.

Today he will discuss the nature, the motives and the objectives of the ongoing Iraqi insurgency, and how to dialogue with the insurgents to bring them into the political process.

Welcome, Mr. Shallal.

STATEMENT BY ANAS SHALLAL

MR. SHALLAL: Thank you so very much, Congresswoman Lynn Woolsey, for holding these very important hearings about Iraq, and lending a voice to the millions of people here in the United States and Iraq who believe that there is a better way.

Let me start by saying that I believe that the Iraqi people still want to see the U.S. play a constructive role in helping Iraq heal from decades of oppression and tyranny. They still believe that the U.S. has the capability to help Iraq transition into a country that respects the rule of law, values human rights, and provides for citizens' needs.

One thing is certain: that most Iraqis want to see an end to the occupation. A recent Zagby poll shows that 69 percent of Shiia, and 82 percent of Sunnis want to see an immediate withdrawal of U.S. troops with a specified timeline. The war is entering its 31st month, and our mission has changed from ridding Iraq of weapons of mass destruction to bringing democracy. Iraqis are asking: does "bringing democracy" mean writing a constitution and holding an election? If so, does that mean that withdrawal of U.S. troops will commence by year's end? Does the constitution have to represent the ethnic and religious make-up of Iraq? What role must religion play in this new constitution? And how

much meddling should the U.S. employ in the process of writing this constitution.

Is the democracy we are bringing to Iraq a homegrown, grassroots effort that will empower and unite the Iraqi people? Or is it a democracy that will codify the tyranny of the majority, and deepen fissures and divisions between the fragile ethnic and sectarian lines that define Iraq's very identity? What will this new constitution do to the right of women under a strict interpretation of Islamic law, as stated in Article 2a for example?

Just a few weeks away from a historic referendum on the constitution, and there is yet a consensus on the key elements, thus paving the way for further division. And just as elections took place in Iraq, where millions of Iraqi citizens were prevented from making their voices heard, due to the abysmal security conditions and lack of information, the constitution is proving to be yet another such milestone. Most Sunnis and many Shiia are intent on rejecting the constitution in its current form, opting for a more representative constitution that preserves the unity of Iraq.

Today the situation in Iraq is very dire. According to the Interior Ministry, over 5,000 Iraqis were kidnapped between December '03 and April '05. Additionally, there are 228 foreign nationals that have been kidnapped since the beginning of the war. A close relative of mine, a 14-year-old boy, was kidnapped last year on his way to school. He was taken from the taxi which was ferrying him. His parent had hired to make sure that their son stays out of harm's way. The demands for ransom came at the end of the day through a cell phone call. The abductors left a return phone number to call when the money is ready. They were told that they would never see their son again if they reported the incident, and clearly had little concern for the authorities. His family had to endure the surrealistic nightmare of negotiating the release of their son. He was dropped off at his home's doorstep four days later, badly beaten and bruised physically and mentally.

Additionally, other basic human needs are not yet met. Electricity is still at an all-time low, with spotty service at best in many cities, including Baghdad. Clean water is available to less than 30 percent of the population, according to a report from Baghdad University. Gas lines stretch for a mile at a time, with many people spending the night in their cars in order to get gas.

A cousin relays a story of having to sleep in his car with a machine gun at his side to get gas for the family generator. They have to siphon the gas from the tank because the use of containers is prohibited. It is hard to imagine such conditions, when Iraq sits on the second largest proven reserve of oil in the world.

A recent report by the IMF indicates that the economic situation in Iraq is stalling, at best, largely due to gross misappropriation of funds and the abysmal security conditions, with security making up sometimes nearly 50 percent of the reconstruction costs. Unemployment is at 30 to 40 percent, and in some areas even higher. Inflation is through the roof--nearly 30 percent for last year alone.

On the health front, Iraqis have had to endure worsening conditions. Nearly all Iraqis receive food rations, and malnutrition is at an all time high, with half the children under the age of five malnourished.

A recent study points out that infant mortality is at 10 percent of live births. Furthermore, urgent care is sorely lacking for those with acute health conditions. Hospitals face a critical shortage of much-needed medicine and supplies. And recently, during a sandstorm, a relative relayed to me a story of a local hospital crammed with nearly 200 patients seeking help for breathing ailments, only to be confronted with the use of only two operational oxygen tanks.

These conditions that I've just mentioned have created an environment that is ideal for those

seeing to polarize Iraq and create further division among the many sectarian and religious communities.

I lay out some of these facts because they are important to understand the insurgency and the proverbial oxygen that it craves.

While we here in United States are focused on the writing of the constitution, Iraqis are generally oblivious to that. When Iraqis are asked "What is the most important issue of concern to you?" the matter of writing an acceptable constitution comes dead last. At the top of the list is electricity, adequate housing, jobs, inflation, security--etcetera.

Nearly three years after the invasion of Iraq, the insurgency is still as forceful as ever, with over 200 people killed in the last two days. Yet little is being done to head it off. For every road that is being built, another is being destroyed. For every home that has gone up, another is bombed from the air. The insurgency has been able to meld into various forms, and has received tacit--if not direct--support from locals in some areas.

Overcoming the insurgency--or "resistance," as it is called in some areas--is complicated and a multi-faceted task. The term "crushing" is often used. This is a military term that encompasses a military solution. By its very definition, "crushing" an insurgency is a counterproductive and oftentimes futile effort. Insurgencies thrive under oppression and oppressive conditions. Most experts agree that countering an insurgency requires a strategy that "wins the hearts and minds of the people"--something that we have not managed to do very well these days. Rather than crushing an insurgency, we have to focus more on defusing it. However, defusing an insurgency requires a political solution. According to Saleh al Mutlaq of the National Dialogue Council, opening a dialogue with the so-called insurgents would suck the oxygen out of the insurgency and diminish the numbers of those being recruited.

The occupation of Iraq, by most estimates, has done little in that regard--and has, in fact, provided the very fuel that has not only emboldened the insurgency but, in fact, increased its potency. The siege of Fallujah in 2004, and more recently in Tall Afar, are just two such examples. In each case, heavy and sometimes indiscriminate air bombardment has caused the death of many innocents. In each case, a strategy of pacification was employed, and in each case the resistance became fiercer and more entrenched.

Why? Because when you kill innocent people, when you destroy someone's home, when you create conditions that make life not worth living--such as cutting off water or electricity or access to hospitals--you leave people with little option but to join some kind of resistance. In other words, my enemy's enemy becomes my friend--not exactly a winning formula for the hearts and minds of the Iraqi people.

A recent Dossier of Civilian Casualties produced by Iraq Body Count indicated that nearly 25,000 civilians have been killed in just the first two years of this war. Over 9,000 of those killed were killed by U.S. air bombardment, many of whom are children and women. Each one of those killed is a relative of someone. He or she is a mother, a father, a daughter, a son, a cousin, a brother, a sister, a relative or a friend of someone.

Every Iraqi you ask about the insurgency will tell you that they are a mixed bag. "Mixed bag" is a code word for, "we don't have a clue." In other words, no one really knows.

Let's take the issue of suicide bombings--a new phenomenon in Iraq. Most Iraqis will say that suicide bombing is not an Iraqi trait; that suicide bombers must be outsiders--as if suicide bombers have a genetic disposition to blowing themselves up.

Most experts--military and otherwise--would agree that disbanding the military and army at

the onset without jobs or guarantees for a decent life created a powder keg for further violence. Most Iraqis would agree that neighboring foreign governments have contributed to the insurgency to benefit their own agenda at the expense of the Iraqi people. Most Iraqis would agree that criminal elements are benefitting handsomely from the chaos and lack of police and government presence, through kidnapping, extortion, and other criminal activity.

It is important to understand that when Iraqis speak of "occupation," they are not only referring to military occupation, but also to economic occupation, as well; the occupation of Iraq's resources and the privatization of Iraqi companies. So as we are speaking in this hearing regarding an end to the military occupation, we have to couple that with the end of abuse and misuse of Iraq's wealth in the hands of a few rich companies who have benefitted greatly, with little oversight or accountability. Iraq's wealth and treasure should be for the Iraqi people, and the Iraqi people alone.

The military shock and awe, coupled with the economic shock and awe have been nothing short of a shocking and awful outcome for the people of Iraq.

When U.S. troops entered Baghdad in April of 2003, they were welcomed by Iraqis who gave out a collective sigh of relief for the end of Saddam Hussein's decades of tyranny and oppression. But like the proverbial fish's head that stinks after three days, let's not overstay our visit, and let's call for the withdrawal of all U.S. troops and war profiteers by the end of the third year of the occupation. And let's call April 9th, 2006, Iraq's true independence day.

Thank you very much.

CONGRESSWOMAN WOOLSEY: Thank you.

[Applause.]

CONGRESSWOMAN WOOLSEY: I'd like to ask my staff to start bringing up the name plates so people know who people are that are here. And I'd like to tell my colleagues--those that are able to stay through the entire witness presentation--we will be going in order of arrival, for your questions and answers.

Now--it's my great honor to welcome Senator Max Cleland as a witness to today's hearing.

There are few greater patriots than Senator Cleland in the United States of America--or really, worldwide. His service to our nation began when he volunteered for duty in Viet Nam at a time when others were consciously avoiding service. And, of course, Senator Cleland served in the U.S. Senate from 1997 to the year 2003, where he served on the Senate Armed Services Committee.

Today Senator Cleland will address the perils of over-relying on military problem-solving, and how we can change our policies in Iraq.

Thank you, Senator.

STATEMENT BY SENATOR MAX CLELAND

SENATOR CLELAND: Thank you, Madam Chairman--ladies and gentlemen.

"The public has been led into a trap from which it will be hard to escape with dignity and honor. They have been tricked into it by a steady withholding of information...The Baghdad communiques are belated, insincere, incomplete. Things have been far worse than we have been told, or administration more bloody and inefficient than the public knows...We are today not far from a disaster." That was a letter written to the London Times by Lawrence of Arabia, July 22, 1920.

In terms of the Iraq war, I agree with my distinguished former colleague and Viet Nam veteran, United States Senator Chuck Hagel, that the war in Iraq is beginning to look a lot like Viet Nam. As a matter of fact, I feel like I'm living in a time warp. I have seen a President of the United

States declare a threat to our nation, attack a country which did not attack us. The pretext for the invasion was later discovered to be false. The Secretary of Defense and his civilian appointees disregarded the advice of top military brass and recommended a minimal force for invasion. It was discovered later--much to our country's chagrin--that the civilian leadership had grossly underestimated the guerilla war in which our nation found itself. In this war, American forces, civilians and local troops sympathetic to the American side, experienced assassinations, suicide bombs and other acts of terror.

The military called for more troops. The public got weary of the casualties, which were much more than expected. The civilian leadership was unrepentant.

The President called for patients from the American people, and for staying the course. The war drew out to a devastating conclusion for the United States. America was torn apart by the war. Citizen was set against citizen. Veteran was set against veteran. It was America's worst foreign policy defeat.

The war was Viet Nam. The President was Lyndon Johnson. The Secretary of Defense was Robert McNamara. His civilian leadership at the Pentagon was known as the "Whiz Kids." The military commander in Viet Nam was General William Westmorland.

Now, I am seeing this movie all over again. I can't stand by silently while thousands of young American soldiers risk their lives--again--for a no-win, no-end war. Our military personnel are the bravest men and women I have ever seen go into harm's way for this country. I especially admire the courage of those I see at Walter Reed Army Medical Center and Bethesda Naval Hospital missing arms, legs and eyes. Other returning soldiers suffering from post traumatic stress disorder are now being sent back for their third tour. These young men and women will carry the war with them to their graves. They are special young Americans, and every one of us owes every one of them our support, love and encouragement.

Now, however, I have concluded that the best way to support our troops is with an exit strategy from Iraq.

Again, this is a time warp for me. We went into Viet Nam mostly alone. We came out solely alone. We went into Iraq virtually alone. And now, with Prime Minister Tony Blair talking about pulling out his troops next year from Iraq, we're on our own again.

Like Viet Nam, we dissed the UN and ;our NATO allies--the very people we need for help in an exit strategy now.

As distressing as our current situation is, we still have time to make sure Iraq does not end like Viet Nam. We need an exit strategy we choose, or it will certainly be chosen for us. The question about Iraq is not whether we will withdraw our forces, but when. More than 100 members of the Iraqi parliament have urged the U.S. to fully withdraw its military forces from Iraq. It is now time to seek what international support we can get for our withdrawal. We need to map out a strategy that works for us, and turn Iraq over to the Iraqis.

Then we can turn our attention to two real tasks before us. First, we need to kill or capture Osama bin Laden and his terrorist cadre who planned the attack on the United States September the 11th. They continue to pose a threat to us, our allies, and our interests around the world. The sooner we do this, the better off we will be, and the safer we will be. We should have killed or captured Bin Laden and his cadre in the mountains of Tora Bora in Afghanistan when we had the chance. We would have done it, had it not been for poor planning and inadequate U.S. forces caused by already preconceived notions of launching an attack on Iraq.

I agree with former White House terrorism advisor Richard Clark who, in his book *Against all Enemies*, stated that attacking Iraq after 911 was like attacking Mexico after Pearl Harbor. It made no sense whatsoever.

The second big challenge our country faces is to rebuild a number of our cities and at least three of our states after Hurricane Katrina. We cannot do this as long as we continue to make Iraq the 51st state. It is time we looked after our own backyard. We are spending more money in Iraq than rebuilding New Orleans, Biloxi, Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama. It's time to bring our troops home, especially the National Guard that was created to guard America and to deal with disasters in our own country, rather than being sent to die in the desert in Iraq.

It is time to put America first.

Iraq does not have to be another Viet Nam. The war in Iraq does not have to drag on forever. It is not too late to learn from our own history.

Why do I urge this course of action for our nation now? Because I've seen this movie before. I know how it ends.

[Applause.]

CONGRESSWOMAN WOOLSEY: The next witness is Ambassador Mack. Ambassador Mack is currently [inaudible.] ambassador to the United Arab Emirates. [Inaudible.]

STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR DAVID MACK

AMBASSADOR MACK: Thank you, Madam Chairman.

The Middle East Institute does not take positions on public policy issues. So I'm speaking in my private capacity. And, in addition to the very generous biographical information provided by Chairman Woolsey, I also served twice in Baghdad.

I have considerable affection for the Iraqi people, but that doesn't mean that it's our job to save them from their own follies.

The U.S. venture into Iraq was overly ambitious, and ill conceived. But we have a responsibility not to leave Iraq in a way that would make matters worse: worse for Iraqis, and laden with future threats to vital U.S. interests, and even greater demands on U.S. resources.

In short, "quagmire" could become a "sink hole" for a battered nation struggling to regain its footing, and for U.S. efforts to defend itself against international terrorism. There are no silver bullets--as the Administration is discovering--nor are there any failsafe parachutes.

The Bush Administration misled Iraqis and Americans by placing too much weight on timetables and milestones. Critics of the Administration should also avoid the trap of easy answers.

The U.S. should embrace modest but achievable expectations for Iraq. And, viewed another way, a realistic Iraq policy should have red-lines for really dangerous behavior by that country, as distinct from Iraqi behavior that is merely disappointing.

Two principal dangers confront us. First, Iraq may become a failed state, plunged into civil war, offering safe havens to international terrorist groups, and a vast pool of embittered and desperate recruits from among the Iraqi population. Think of Afghanistan, following the withdrawal of Soviet forces. But Iraq's strategic position, married to its far superior resources of potential wealth, educated persons, and advanced knowledge of weaponry would make it vastly more dangerous.

Second, the dominant political order in Iraq may be subject to overbearing influence from Iran that would be hostile to U.S. interests. Iraqis, including the majority Shiia population, tend to be highly nationalistic. And under circumstances of minimal stability and prosperity, they would strongly resist

Iranian hegemony. However, with a committed insurgency, the potential secession of Iraqi Kurdistan, and an abrupt withdrawal of U.S. forces, demands of survival would greatly increase the influence of Tehran.

Two goals are essential. First, Iraqi cooperation in the war against terrorists and on violence against Americans, Iraqis and friendly governments in the region.

Second: strict Iraqi adherence to U.N. resolutions prohibiting future efforts to reconstitute weapons of mass destruction or long-range missile programs.

I don't think these are bipartisan issues. I think these are issues that almost any U.S. government would have to espouse.

No Iraqi government can deliver on these goals, so important to us, without support in the areas of security, political development, and economics. A responsible U.S. disengagement from Iraq requires an international diplomatic context, and a lower U.S. profile. And I suggest seven actions.

One, work with either the United Nations or an ad hoc coalition to set up a contact group composed of Iraq's neighbors and major governments pledging to support Iraq's territorial integrity and economic reconstruction. Such a group should include Iran and Syria, and the U.S. must be prepared to meet with their representatives in this context, on the basis of mutual respect.

Two: the contact group should name a respected non-American figure to offer international good offices to Iraqi political leaders. There's no point in us continuing to try to monopolize the political process out there. But this would support a more inclusive constitutional process and efforts to bring dissident Iraqi groups renouncing the resort to violence into national institutions--including their own army.

Three: at the next Iraqi donors conference, the U.S. should offer to bring its own assistance program into a multi-lateral framework, as incentive for greater efforts by other donors.

Four: the U.S. and Iraqi governments should agree on benchmarks for the gradual disengagement of U.S. and other foreign military units from the policing of Iraqi cities and major lines of transportation, as well as the gradual reduction of overall force levels.

Five: the U.S. and Iraqi governments should make arrangements for the period in which residual U.S. forces would be requested by the Iraqis to provide training, logistics, air cover, and backup to Iraqi forces. We've seen this in Bosnia. We're seeing this today in Afghanistan.

Six: the U.S. should make clear that the intention of the United States is not to maintain forces in Iraq beyond modest, declining levels, or without Iraqi agreement. At the same time, we will not engage in precipitous withdrawal that would jeopardize Iraq's own efforts to assure its national security. To that end, we will not establish artificial deadlines.

Seven: the U.S. should encourage Iraq to seek the assistance of other governments, especially from the NATO alliance, in providing military assistance and training.

Thank you for your patients, and I look forward to questions as time permits.

CONGRESSWOMAN WOOLSEY: [Inaudible.] Oh, I can't remember to turn this on. Thank you.

Why we're in this little tiny room? It was virtually almost impossible to get a room for this very subject. The Democrats only control two rooms, and they're always full. But then I hear from my colleague, Congressman DeFazio, that I made a mistake by not asking him to get a Transportation room for us. So--thank you for being here in the tiny room. Know that if there's anybody that wants a seat to watch this, we're streaming this on my website in my office. So you can always go there, because we've

got a couple more hours. So you might not want to stand all that time.

And there is a seat here, if somebody would like to sit in it. What a waste.

So, now--thank you. It is my pleasure to welcome the very distinguished professor Antonia Chayes.

Professor Chayes is currently director of the Project on Compliance and International Conflict Management at Harvard University's Law School.

During the Carter Administration, she served as Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Manpower Reserve Affairs and Installations; then as Undersecretary of the Air Force.

Professor Chayes will speak about ways to empower Iraqis to assume full control over reconstruction and reconciliation efforts, and how to draw upon successful conflict resolution models used in other countries.

Professor, thank you so much for being here.

STATEMENT BY PROFESSOR ANTONIA CHAYES

DR. CHAYES: I'd like to take off from the setting that has been so beautifully described, and not elaborate on that--and respond, in part, to Ambassador Mack, because I agree in part, and disagree in part. And I think it's time that we begin to look at some positive options that might really be available.

I think the options are very limited. I also thought about a contact group. I think it's going to be very difficult to develop a group like the Quartet, in Israel/Palestine, or the contact group that worked pretty well in the Balkans. We can give it a try, but I think the most likely option is a high-level, international mediator. And how would the United States deal with such a mediator? And I would say it's a mediation process that would have many layers, is what I've been thinking about.

Clearly, the third-party role that the United States now can play is not that of a neutral. WE are by no means neutral in this situation. But I think that the United States, for the foreseeable future--which I hope will not be much longer than a year--must provide security and continue the training that it has started, and make every attempt to internationalize that training. And it has done so with limited success. But I think that's possible.

I mean, we're in a situation where it is bad to stay and bad to leave--as has been pointed out by the other witnesses. One of the thoughts I had is that in staying, we need to totally alter the doctrine--the military doctrine--by which we stay. And what I mean by that is: we are now in a role--in multiple roles. We are occupiers, we are counter-insurgency, we're war fighters, and we're peace keepers. That's an intolerable conflict of roles.

I think--and particularly reading the news today, and what happened at Tall Afar, that we have got to withdraw from the role of war fighters, and probably withdraw, as well, from an active anti-insurgency role, and move to what we would call a "stability force."

Now, will that persuade anybody? Will anybody believe that we are doing anything but an in-place withdrawal? That's a hard question. But we did it well internationally. I mean, I wish we could internationalize the forces. We cannot. I wish we could blue-hat the Americans as we did in Korea--but I think that's totally unlikely.

So, if we made a public announcement, at the same time that a mediator was in place, that the role of the U.S. forces is simply to train, to be replaced, and to be stability forces--like I4, and K4--then it might be that we could provide at least as good security as now is provided--which isn't very good--and to roll back the hostilities somewhat.

As I say, this isn't a great alternative. There are lots of reasons why the United States would

resist that. They'll say "We'll be sitting ducks," etcetera, etcetera. A robust stability force doesn't mean that the soldiers lay down their arms. Not at all. They can act in defense of themselves, and in defense of the mission--which means they can be pretty active. But they don't go into a Fallujah and raze it to the ground. You can't save Iraq by burning it to the ground. Senator Cleland--we've been there before.

All right. I think the second thing is the United States has got to withdraw from the political process. Ambassador Khalilzad has been very active--probably constructive--but the general role of dominating that political process, and having an American-model constitution, or American-model government is simply not going to work. And I think, there, a mediator can begin to help shape the process.

When you peel away the fact that we invaded, when you peel away the fact that we're an occupation force, what we will be left with is a potential civil war--as has been described, And who can provide those good offices?

Well, the U.N. is certainly tainted; tainted by the Oil-for-Food scandal; tainted--I mean shell-shocked, itself, by the attack on its headquarters, and the loss of some of its best people. Yet there are, within the U.N. system, people who have the stature and the independence--no agenda; people like, I would say, Alvaro DeSoto, who is now already in the Middle East--a model like that of the OSCE's High Commissioner on National Minorities, Max Vander Stoel--I mean, there are these people. And what the mediator can do is to begin to--I mean, Brahimi, for example, was already there in the early stages. Brahimi, I think, has been through the wringer with Iraq and Afghanistan.

But there are people of that stature, that have to understand the issues of minority and majority rights, that have begun to be demanded. And there is this tension between the pull for national unity, and the pull for factional dominance.

There have to be issues of human rights, political and civil rights--not just of women, but of other minorities--not that women are minorities--but people who lack power have to be given certain kinds of power. And even identifying all of the sub factions within the factions--I mean, you've got to have, sitting at that table, among the Shiites, the Al Sistani group all the way to Mokhtada al Sadr. And in the Sunni groups, I don't think we even now know what all the factions are. And so they've got to be exposed.

Then I would push the mediative function further. And one of the best things that it can do is to get some agreement on how and when American troops should withdraw. And if that becomes an Iraqi initiative that is agreed upon by the factions, I think the withdrawal will be far better than what is likely to happen, which is going to be a political withdrawal because the Americans are tired of being there.

So, at the same time, this mediative function has got to internationalize the training effort--I think that can be done--and move through other kinds of assistance, like developing rule of law. There's a U.N. group there now working on that.

So, while I believe that many multilateral options do seem out of reach, given the history of the invasion, I think that the tool of mediation is possible. It's visible and it's valuable, and it's a quieter form of intervention. It doesn't ask for huge contributions of troops from other nations that are unwilling to do it. And I think it is a way to start on a constructive road.

CONGRESSWOMAN WOOLSEY: Thank you, Professor. And that concludes the witness testimony portion of our hearing--except when General Hoar arrives--which he will--we will stop the questions and answers and the dialogue part of this, and he will give his testimony, and then we'll go on

with questions and answers.

So now we'll begin with this portion.

For my colleagues' sake, I will tell you the order that we will be calling upon you. First, Congressman Conyers, DeFazio, Stark, McDermott, Farr, Capuano, Meehan, Doggett, Capps, Hinchey, Schakowsky, Olver.

I haven't turned around to see if they're all still here. And if new members come in--oh, we have Mr. Filner there, thank you--then we'll go from there.

Now, it's going to be very difficult for those who aren't at the front table to get involved in the dialogue. And we have two microphones. So it's going to be a bit tough.

But what I'm going to ask my colleagues is: try to keep your time within five minutes; to ask your question, give your statement within that time, if the response from the respondent--the witness--ask a direct question to an individual, or to the whole panel. But know that we don't want any one member to have half an hour. As we can make that four ourselves.

So, first--and I'm going to waive my question-answering time. I'll be here the whole time. So I will have time throughout the process.

I just wanted to say that my question--and I hope I hear it in your answers to others--is how best we can give Iraq back to the Iraqi people, including, one, the responsibility for rebuilding their country and, two, the benefits that will be derived from their having their own country back, under their own control, and what our responsibility would be in helping them get there.

So--but I'm going to yield now to John Conyers, from Michigan.

CONGRESSMAN CONYERS: Thank you, Chairman Woolsey for these excellent witnesses.

First of all, I believe what you've done today in assembling these very learned persons here, and ourselves, make you eminently qualified to become a chairman in the very next Congress--

[Laughter.]

--and I hope that this will occur.

CONGRESSWOMAN WOOLSEY: I'm waiting.

CONGRESSMAN CONYERS: I have just three points I want to make, and then I'll leave it open to my friends on the panel. And I'm going to do it quickly and set a good example of the brevity that is required under these circumstances.

The first is: how do we continue these discussions, and publish and circulate them?

The second consideration--and you'll note from these points I pull out--is that I'm stepping back from the actual issue that brings us here, because I believe the solution is really involved in a great number of other things, other than the brilliant substantive ideas that we've all heard here this morning.

The second consideration is: how do we bring the executive branch, the Congress, the intelligence, military into these discussions so that it isn't just us, the advance citizenry of this country, talking among ourselves in a fashion that is helpful, but will not lead to solutions?

The third is: the U.S.--how do we maximize United States citizen participation in the solutions that will lead sooner to our withdrawal from Iraq?

And of course the point's been made about multinational support--military support--coming in as we move out. But I do have to include the question of whether beginning the process of removal of the 43rd Chief Executive of the United States under Article 2, Section 4, would have any positive effect on what it is that brings us here. And I would open this up to the five distinguished panelists to pick any piece of it for the few minutes that we have left.

And I thank you very much, Madam Chair.

CONGRESSWOMAN WOOLSEY: [Off mike.] [Inaudible.]

CONGRESSMAN CONYERS: No, I'm not trying to--you see, the reason I've done it this way is that on the way here this morning, I realized that the questions here--the first thing I wrote down is: "How to prevent a civil war." Is there anyone that can't see what's going to happen here--maybe even if we stay, much less if we leave.

CONGRESSWOMAN WOOLSEY: Would anybody like [Off mike.] [Inaudible.]

CONGRESSMAN CONYERS: All right.

DR. CHAYES: I think this kind of a hearing, and the proliferation of this kind of a hearing--of hearings--asking in a non-hostile way to have some representatives of the government--perhaps you don't ask Condi Rice to be on the defensive, but you ask somebody who is lower down, and working within the State Department, to engage in a dialogue with somebody like Ambassador Mack at hearings.

I think this notion of a Congressional voice of the minority, and even dissenting majorities, to begin to try to develop a bipartisan, constructive approach, is very important. As to involving citizen participation, you need dramatic events like Cindy Sheehan. And I don't know how you mount that.

CONGRESSMAN CONYERS: There's a rally--I mean, we've got examples. I mean, the people stopped the Viet Nam war. The government didn't stop it. We might still be over there.

So, I welcome--and thank you for your suggestion.

Is there a minute for one other person, Madam Chair?

DR. KATZMAN: Just to sort of focus on Iraqi matters, I think the key is--what I think we have to bear in mind is--the Iraqi Sunnis have accepted nothing that has happened to them since March 19, 2003. The only reaction they've had to the constitution has been negative. They did not vote in the January elections.

If a formula could be found whereby the Sunni Arabs feel they have a place in the new Iraq, my view is there would be no insurgency. This would be resolved this afternoon.

The problem is, we have not found a solution to bringing the Sunni Arabs in.

The U.S. strategy has been to sort of overwhelm them--first with military force, and then with a transition road map which has not brought them in. And "the train is leaving the station" approach--"Get on board, otherwise you'll be left out"--that has not worked.

There are, you know, learned diplomats in the government, smarter men than I am, certainly looking for solutions, that know Iraq very well. AS a technical expert on Iraq, my view is: once we find a formula to get the Sunni Arabs into this process in a way that they feel they have a stake in the new Iraq, I think we're on the way to a resolution of the issue.

AMBASSADOR MACK: Madam Chairman, could I just add a point to that?

CONGRESSWOMAN WOOLSEY: Yes, sir--Ambassador.

AMBASSADOR MACK: The point that Dr. Katzman has made, and Mr. Shallal made, about the need for inclusiveness--and others have made--is vitally important; but when we say--and here's where I would take issue with my friend, Ken Katzman--when we say that nothing has worked to get the Sunnis included, this comes against the background of our support for other people in the Iraqi body politic who insisted that membership in the Bath party, or having a position in the Iraqi army should exclude you from being included in the political process.

We thereby alienated a minority--but a very strong and influential minority--who, among other things, were organized among themselves, knew where explosives could be cached, and were suddenly

deprived of a means of supporting their family, and of self-respect--to say nothing of being deprived of any serious opportunity for being involved in the political process.

So what we need is not simply to get somebody's tame Sunnis that they drug back to Iraq from London. We need to get credible Sunni leaders involved. And, for that purpose, I certainly agree with Dr. Chayes that we need some kind of high-level international figure. And I don't want to undercut the work of Ambassador Bremer, Negroponte, Ambassador Khalilzad--they're true patriots. But they were the wrong nationality. From the very beginning, the senior, high-profile international political figure in Iraq should not have been an American.

CONGRESSWOMAN WOOLSEY: And now we'll move to our Congressman Jim McDermott from Washington State.

CONGRESSMAN McDERMOTT: Thank you, Madam Chairman.

August 29 to August 31 I spent in Jordan, talking to Iraqis. As many of you may know, there's a million Iraqis living in Amman. They've fled the city, many of them, to escape assassination or to escape kidnapping or whatever. And I had dinner with a number of them, and I just want to give you a short report, and then comment on some of the things that have been offered here.

I sat at a dinner with the Oil Minister from the Saddam Hussein era, the Ambassador to the U. N. from that era, the gentleman in the foreign service who was alleged to have gone to Niger to look for the yellow-cake. I spoke to the Arab Thought Forum in Amman. And the first question they asked, again and again, was: "Why is the United States in Iraq?" And we dismissed, quickly, all the stated reasons.

Their belief is that the United States is trying to divide Iraq into three pieces; that they're basically trying to create a weak country that can have no power in that area; and that the business that we have created by all this Sunni-Shiia stuff is really divisive; and what we really miss is Arab versus Persian. They talked endlessly about the fact that "You don't seem to understand: Sunnis are Arabs, and Shiia are divided between Arabs and Persians." They said Sistani couldn't even vote in the election, but he does all the speaking for the Shiia.

What they expect is--well, first of all, they said the biggest mistake you made was wiping out the army. You didn't wipe out the army. 500,000 people were suddenly without any way to make a living. They went underground, and they're organized. And you're not dealing with foreigners in this issue. You're dealing with the army that you drove underground with their arms in their hands.

And until you understand that--you've got to understand the next stage in this is going to be: when Mokhtada al Sadr, an Arab Shiia, joins with the Sunnis against the Persian Shiia. There's a whole layer of things going on here that people simply--the simple-minded kind of stuff we get in the American press is absolutely worthless when you talk to these people who were absolutely at the top of their government.

Now, they say that what we ought to do is have an Arab summit. And in this instance, Ambassador Mack and Dr. Chayes both have hit on the issue that they talk about: get a non-American figure to call a peace summit in Amman. For instance, one name I didn't hear mentioned was Prince Hassan. He's liked by both Sunni and by Shiia. He's trusted by both. He could call both the Shiia and the Sunni down to Amman and begin the process of letting them work it out how they're going to have it happen.

They all said, 'You've got to get out of here, and you've got to state that you're not going to stay, and you're not going to keep bases.' And then they laughed and said, "But we know George Bush

isn't going to do that."

So, we're stuck--until we convene that summit, with somebody else calling for--and they only talked about Hassan because he's done some of this kind of stuff before, and he has not been involved on either side. But there are other people that could be considered for that kind of a summit.

And, absent that, you're not going to have any movement. You're going to have civil war--they said 15 years minimum, if that constitution goes in place.

And I'd like to have a response from Ambassador Mack and Dr. Chayes.

AMBASSADOR MACK: I think there's a lot to be said for involving Jordan, as well as other neighboring states, in this process. And I think it's--I know the three individuals that you mentioned having meeting. I've known at least one of them since the 1960s. And there is this deep feeling of Arab Iraqi patriotism being under fire.

The politics of Iraq are extremely complex, and it's not clear that you can achieve a consensus on that strictly Arab level. You have another very large minority--Kurdish--would resist being brought into an explicitly Arab conference of that kind.

And it's also the case--as your contacts there observed--that there are some serious differences within the Shiia Arab Iraqi community, between those like Mokhtada al Sadr who are more Iraqi nationalists in their outlook sometimes, and others who at least culturally are Persian; or because of the support they got during their exile owe a lot to the Iranians, and Iranian support. And that is particularly the case with the current dominant group within the Iraqi government who have allied themselves in a working alliance with the Kurds.

That said, I think it is necessary for us to explore all of these potential areas of support within Iraq's neighbors. I would include our NATO ally Turkey. This current military conflict in Tall Afar is taking place in a city where almost all members of the population are Turkmen, with close ethnic identity with Turkey. And we certainly could have used a better working relationship with Turkey regarding Iraq before we decided that we would just resort to purely military means--using, as it turned out, a force primarily consisting of Kurdish Iraqis as our allies in the effort to suppress any opposition in Tall Afar.

DR. CHAYES: I think that any large public, visible summit at this point would be ill advised. I think there are quiet ways in which the Jordanians can help--perhaps part in the training for self-government process.

But I think it's really important to have started a quiet mediation process. Another example, of course, that does involve an American, is George Mitchell in Northern Ireland. Identifying all the sub-factions is going to be so important. And I think relying on the Jordanians for greater understanding can be very useful. But I think a peace summit that is large and visible would be ill advised at this point.

MR. SHALLAL: If I could say something--the other name that I've heard floated is also Jimmy Carter. That's been floated by many Arabs, as well--many Iraqis.

CONGRESSWOMAN WOOLSEY: Thank you.

Before I turn the microphone over to Congressman Farr, I'll go over the list again: Farr, Capuano, Meehan, Doggett, Capps, Hinchey, Schakowsky, Olver, Rangel, Kucinich--in that order.

And now I yield to Sam Farr, from California.

CONGRESSMAN FARR: Thank you very much. I want to thank you very much for having this hearing. It's long overdue, and I want to thank Congressman Conyers for having the first hearing. It's too bad that this very popular issue with American people is having to be run with basement politics

in the Capitol; that we can't even begin to get a full committee room, a bipartisan hearing and, in essence, you have the Members sitting here who are all members of the Democratic Party. I believe we all voted against the Resolution for unilateral invasion, and we've been struggling internally just to get to this point.

So I really appreciate all of you coming, because I know you do it at some risk to criticism from the Administration.

I liked your whole theme here, that we've got to move from the war fights to peace keepers. And I think you've all indicated that that's got to be an initiative. But that initiative is usually done by the leadership of America, which is not supporting that role right now.

And I think that's the frustration of Members of Congress. We cannot--we're the minority party here. We can't even get a great room to have this hearing. We can't get the majority who controls all the decisions in this House to agree with us.

So my question really goes--and it's several fold. I mean, I've tried to do something, following-up on recommendations about post-conflict of creating a center--and we've done this at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey--where for the first time we have a center for post-conflict reconstruction. We just had some games out there, some workshops, where members of our military, foreign military, NGOs, State Department, USAID, and U.N. all participated. And a remarkable feeling among that group was: "This has never been done before. We really need this. And it's very exciting to be on this dialogue"

What we also found out--and I guess this gets to part of the questions. is that to move from war fighters to peace keepers--that the peace keepers need protection, too. We've not seen that so necessary before in other areas. But the NGOs are just as much at risk as U.S. soldiers are.

So how do we do that? And part of that: is the international community ready to step up to the plate? It's not going to happen with this administration in Washington, to begin this journey of beginning the--we've all talked about immediate withdrawal. I think what we're talking about here is an immediate plan to begin a plan of withdrawal. We need that immediately. And since it's not coming from our Secretaries of Defense and State, can it come from your connections in the international community? Are they willing to put some pressure to beginning that initiative to begin the movement from war fighters to peace keepers?

And, post-conflict reconstruction--I'm really asking that of all of you--if you think that, in your professional experiences and professional context, that the rest of the people who feel like you do will step up to the plate, as well?

We're trying to step up to the plate just to bring the attention. But we can't do it just from a legislative, because we can't control the bills that come out of here, or the money that's spent coming out of here. We can talk about it a lot, and that's what we're doing today.

But we need some help from the outside, particular in the international community, and in the diplomatic community, to bring these forces together. And do you think that there's capacity out there to do that/

CONGRESSWOMAN WOOLSEY: Senator Cleland, would you like to respond to that?

[Laughter.]

You looked uncomfortable.

SENATOR CLELAND: I think the key word in "exit strategy" is not just "exit" but "strategy." And I think of the words of Clausewitz, the great German theoretician on war: the leader

must know the last step he's going to take before he takes the first step.

See, both in Viet Nam and here, that was not done. Just sitting here thinking of that line in Bob Woodward's book Plan of Attack, where Colin Powell--my fellow Viet Nam veteran--he and Schwarzkopf did put together a successful plan dealing with Iraq and Saddam Hussein in '91. And it was limited objectives, it was a military objective that could be attainable, and we were in it with a coalition, and we accomplished that mission, and we had an international coalition to provide an exit strategy. That's the way it works.

I see in Bob Woodward's book this moment when Colin Powell goes before President Bush and says, "Mr. President, do you understand the consequences?" See, here in Iraq, I think the President, or his top team, did not either understand the consequences, or dissed any advice from General Hoar, Secretary Powell--and many others--to include General Shinseki and many other top military brass.

If you're going to take out a regime, you've got to send in a massive force to secure the population--what General Tony Zinni, the former CENTCOM Commander, calls the "center of gravity in a guerilla war." He's also a Viet Nam veteran.

So, what was done here--and one of the reasons the exit strategy is complicated--is because it was not thought about upon the entrance, upon the attack. So you disregarded General Shinseki's advice for 500,000 troops. The President disregarded the advice of General Tommy Franks on the first briefing in Crawford, Texas, for 500,000 troops. Why? Not just take out Saddam Hussein the oil fields, but secure the 25 million people in Iraq, and do provide them with not only security, but electricity and safety, to run their country. Then you can accomplish your political mission.

But if you don't have a shield of security, you will, number one, never beat the terrorists. You're never successful against a guerilla war, and therefore, you're never going to win the hearts and minds of people.

And so we don't have an exit strategy, because it was not thought of going in. And so what you had--as a four-star general called me four years ago and said that the Administration had a five-year plan for war--it was to use Iraq as a stepping stone for then going against Syria and, ultimately, Iran. It was a military occupation of the Middle East. And that's the plan. That was the overall plan.

You still hear them--some of them--talking about going into Iran. Well, you know, the ground truth is not that way.

So now that we have the quagmire that's looking like a sink-hole, and this whole thing is deteriorating into a civil war.

So--that's why my remarks concentrated not on the Iraqi constitution, but on the U.S. Constitution; and on our forces, that we're losing, and on our needs here. Number one, we need to focus and re-focus the American military on the hunt for Bin Laden and his terrorist cadre. Step number one--because they're still out there. That may be one of the great strategic errors of our nation: that those who attacked us, we let go free. And we're not focusing on them, we're bogged down in Baghdad.

Secondly, now we do have a national emergency here at home--in my native region of the world, Mississippi, Alabama and Louisiana. And, in Georgia, we don't normally claim them--

[Laughter.]

--but now we'll claim them.

[Laughter.]

Now we claim them. And they're in real trouble. And even people from Georgia are helping them out.

So we're in deep trouble here. And we have our priorities all screwed up now, and we're a mess in Iraq. And it is time to focus on an exit strategy, which means: we control the timetable; not the Iraqi president, not the parliament there, and not the people and not the international community. You'd need an international community to cover your rear end as you get out. But because we dissed the international community--especially NATO and our friends in Western Europe--they're all moving away from us. So we're in deep trouble.

But that still doesn't mean we can't control the situation--which we have to, because we have to refocus our American military, which is suffering mightily here. And we can get into that, if you want to.

We have to refocus our American military on the real terrorist threat to our country, and that's morphing into 60 different nations around the world--Osama bin Laden and his terrorist cadre--and we have to refocus on taking care of our own backyard and the people that have been affected by the hurricane.

CONGRESSWOMAN WOOLSEY: Thank you, Senator.

Ambassador Mack?

AMBASSADOR MACK: I wouldn't have anything to add to that.

CONGRESSMAN FARR: My question was: is an international community ready to step up to the plate? Can we pull them together?

DR. CHAYES: No, I don't think so. I think the fact that we invaded, we violated the U.N. charter, we ignored the resolution--the U.N. Security Council Resolution. I think what we have seen in the loss of support from Spain and the decreasing support from the U.K.--I think it's not possible to ask for military assistance. I don't think we're going to get much financial assistance from the international community. And I think that we have to look for it in small ways, such as NATO help with training, U. N. help with developing a rule of law, Middle Eastern help with some funding.

But I think that the expectations have to be very modest. And I still go back to my notion--I think I disagree with the Senator--that it cannot not be on the U.S.'s timetable. That's going to be a political disaster. It needs to be on the Iraqis' timetable, representing--with all factions representing the voice of when they want the Americans out.

CONGRESSWOMAN WOOLSEY: Can you be really quick?

AMBASSADOR MACK: Yes.

Representative Farr--it's going to be hard to get the international community involved, but if we do some important symbolic things that have been discussed here--get a high-profile, international, non-American mediator as the principal focus of the politics; engage other donors by offering to put our assistance funds into an international consortium, instead of thinking that we can just monopolize it for our own benefit--these could be important steps.

CONGRESSWOMAN WOOLSEY: We are going to go around our list, and thank Congressman Walter Jones, from North Carolina for joining us. Thank you. You've made it bipartisan.

[Laughter.]

[Applause.]

And we're going to ask Congressman Jones to ask questions next, or speak next.

But I need to announce that we're going to be voting somewhere around 11:45 to 12:15, and we will--I'm going to stay here, because we're voting on a rule. I'm going to ignore it. But if the panel would like some time, we'll stop for a very short time. Otherwise, we'll just keep right on going. I

would love it--and ask the Members to come back after you vote, because this is so very important today.

So--Walter Jones, thank you for joining us.

CONGRESSMAN WALTER JONES: Madam Chairman, thank you very much. And [Off mike.] [Inaudible.]--joining in a bipartisan way for a resolution that would ask that there be a--if I can use a football analogy--be a fourth-quarter, and declare victory after the fourth quarter.

This past weekend--and, as you know, being a conservative Republican, I've taken some criticism for doing what I think is right--but I believe that those of us--Democrat or Republican--whatever the issue is, if we don't do what's right, then we're cheating the people.

But I found last week this quote from candidate Bush, chastising President Clinton because he did not have a timetable. And I'd like to read this, and then I'll close, Madam Chairman.

This is in the Houston Chronicle, April 9, 1999--candidate Bush chastising President Clinton: "Victory means exit strategy, and it's important for the President to explain to us what the exit strategy is."

Now, another quote in the New York Times, that was June 6, 1999: "I think it's also important for the President to lay out a timetable as to how long they will be involved, and when they will be withdrawn."

Our resolution, which I think--again--is the first step in meeting our Constitutional responsibility--we fund the troops, it is our responsibility to also discuss the policy. And I believe sincerely that any--I met with General Zinni and myself last Thursday, a wonderful meeting for 50 minutes in this office upstairs. And I'm of the firm belief that to have victory you must have an end strategy.

And I believe we're at a time that the end strategy needs to be discussed--maybe not in full detail, but let us know that we have an end strategy. That's what I think is important.

Again, I thank you for letting me sit here for the next few minutes. And thank you very much. And I thank you.

CONGRESSWOMAN WOOLSEY: Thank you for joining us.

[Applause.]

Now--Michael Capuano, Massachusetts.

CONGRESSMAN CAPUANO: [Inaudible.]--Okay. How's that?

The administration consistently comes back and forth every once in awhile, refer to people like me as some sort of people who just want to hug and hold, and give therapy to terrorists.

I want to echo--and I won't speak for anybody else on the panel--but I want to thank Senator Cleland for his comments. I totally, 100 percent agree with him that we need to hunt down and kill or capture Osama bin Laden and his cadre. And I would prefer kill, but that's okay. We're not passivists--not all of us. Some might be, and that's fine. But I'm not. I'm just for the right military action in the right circumstances.

I happen to be one that believes that all of the circumstances that are currently happening in Iraq were foreseeable. I think, actually, everything that has happened has been inevitable. I think it is inevitable we are currently in the midst of a civil war in Iraq, and it is inevitable that we will see more of a civil war in Iraq.

I also think that all of the comments that have been made here by all the speakers today, and many of the people that aren't here, and many of the members of this panel--both the Members of Congress and others--are reasonable. I think they're all pretty much in the same ballpark as to how to

take the next step, considering the cards that we're dealt.

My concern to the panel--my question--really starts from the fact that, unfortunately--like it or not--I have come to the conclusion that this administration won't listen to any of this. They're intent on their path, and on their approach, and on their policies. Therefore, everything we say will fall on deaf ears. Now, that doesn't mean we shouldn't say it, and shouldn't continue to try to push it and maybe hope for change. I think that's why I'm here today.

But I see a situation where we have to wait until 2009 before we have any real hope of a change from the present. Because we'll have a new president, and I hope whoever it is will come in with new policies, new changes.

And my question to the panelists is: do you think that we can continue on the same policies--no matter how much we may disagree with them, no matter how foolish they may be, no matter what results they may bring--and stumble along until 2009, and then be able to extricate ourselves? Because my fear is that that will be too late, and we'll be stuck in a situation just like Viet Nam, where we'll be pulling people out on helicopters, and have a situation that is completely untenable.

But I'd like to hear from the panelists as to whether you think it is possible for us to stumble through that long?

AMBASSADOR MACK: Representative Capuano, the answer is no, it's not possible.

CONGRESSWOMAN WOOLSEY: Senator?

SENATOR CLELAND: Not only "no," but "hell no." This is part of the movie that chills my very bones, that I have seen before. It's Lyndon Johnson, 1967: "Stay the course, keep your finger in the dike. That's the only option." Well, that's not true.

And I went through the Tet Offensive and the siege of Khe Sanh and in the year '68 saw us losing 15,000 Americans. And Lyndon Johnson ultimately have to leave the Office of the Presidency.

The truth of the matter is: in terms of military strategy, you've really got two options. One is win, and how to put together a strategy to win--especially if you're going to take over a country and change the regime. Or, you have a strategy to exit. And the truth of the matter is--as I've quote Clausewitz--that the best leader has a strategy to go in and a strategy to get out. Both are needed before you go in.

And you really need to know what you're going to do, what the last step is you're going to take.

The problem with where we are now is that that thinking never went on in the White House. It may have gone on in the State Department with the post-regime change--all that kind of stuff. But that was never taken seriously.

What you see now is absolutely "stay the path," "stay the course." But what's "the course?" The course is to get more young Americans killed, when we really need them back here--especially the guard--to take care of what's going on here. And, more and more, as each day goes by, it should be more and more painfully obvious to us that we are not pursuing the very people who came and killed us September the 11th. And that is Osama bin Laden and his terrorist cadre.

What is happening to the hunt for bin Laden? How tough is it to find a six-foot-five Arab on kidney dialysis in the desert?

[Laughter.]

The most powerful nation in the world seems unable to do that. Give me a break! Why? Because this President, and this team, was obsessed--obsessed--with taking out Saddam Hussein, come hell or high water. And they forgot their main mission, which is go after bin Laden, kill or capture him

and his terrorist cadre.

We will be safer when that is done. And every day we stay in Iraq compromises that effort. It also compromises the effort down in New Orleans and Biloxi.

CONGRESSWOMAN WOOLSEY: Thank you, Senator.

We're going to move down to this end of the table, with Mr. Shallal and Dr. Katzman.

MR. SHALLAL: I think the other thing that needs to be done here with this is to stop defining the war in Iraq as part of the war on terrorism. I think that's really the key issue. You know, we may have went into it with that kind of definition, but I think we need to change that kind of paradigm. It is not the war on terrorism anymore. The terrorism is now being perpetrated on the Iraqi people.

When I talk to the average person that is supporting this war, oftentimes they say the reason why they're supporting this war is because they don't want to bring the terrorists home. They want to fight them abroad, and continue fighting them there, because if we, all of a sudden blink and stop fighting them, somehow all these people will turn around and come here to our shores.

And that's just illogical. These people are fighting for their land. They have their own agendas--all kinds of different agendas. Some people feel like America or the West should not be involved in any Arab territory at all. Some people feel that they're fighting a resistance for nationalism and other issues--for nationalistic purposes.

But I think we really need to redefine this war, and redefine it on our terms, and not necessarily just continue it to be the "war on terrorism."

And I think just from hearing all the discussion here--this is just a little plug--I think there's a real case to be made for a Department of Peace that would be able to find some of these solutions and have them readily available to us when we get into these kind of situations--which seems to be quite frequently.

CONGRESSWOMAN WOOLSEY: Thank you.

[Applause.]

Dr. Katzman?

DR. KATZMAN: Sort of CRS clinical answer, if I could, to Mr. Capuano.

I think our assessment is: Iraq is not a stable situation now. It is not stabilizing. It is not stabilizing. Even U.S. military commanders acknowledge the insurgents are operating virtually everything--particularly in the western region.

But I'm concerned that we've seen a lot of instability in Basra lately. Basra is way outside the support envelope for Sunni insurgents. It is solidly Shiite, very close to the Iranian border. The insurgents should not be able to get anywhere near Basra, yet they've killed at least three British soldiers this past week, four American contractors.

So we are not seeing a diminution of the insurgency. I think that's a clinical answer.

Now, the thing is: I think we would assess--we would not see a collapse of this government while U.S. forces are there. I do not see a Saigon-type scenario while U.S. forces are there. The insurgents simply are not that strong to overturn this government while U.S. forces are there.

So the question, I think--and that's for the American people; CRS is certainly not going to answer that question: are the casualties tolerable in the interim, 'til we get to a solution? I think that's the key question.

We are taking casualties, obviously. But the government is holding. And I do not see it collapsing while we're there.

CONGRESSWOMAN WOOLSEY: Doctor--?

SENATOR CLELAND: Madam Chairman? I've got to respond to "are casualties tolerable."

CONGRESSWOMAN WOOLSEY: All right.

SENATOR CLELAND: If you take casualties, it must be for a darned good reason. Now, I voted for the war resolution because of--I believe the President and his team said weapons of mass destruction. Condi Rice was talking about mushroom cloud, ties to Al Qaeda--all that kind of stuff. All of that has proven to be false.

So the original reason--as the pretext for invasion--has been stripped away. Now we're down to: what are we fighting for? An Iraqi constitution that we ought not to write--let them write it? I mean, if you go to Walter Reed, as I do from time to time, and to Bethesda, and you see the casualties that we're taking--a majority of which are done by explosive devices, which shatters your body, your insides, your brain sometimes, and leaves you sometimes with missing limbs, and arms and eyes--you go over there and see if you think the casualties are "tolerable" right now--what we're into in almost approaching the third year of the war.

They are no longer tolerable. I have concluded that. That is why we need an exit strategy.

And we now find an exit strategy--we didn't have the right strategy going in, because the exit strategy was never envisioned. It was a five-year plan for war, moving on to Iran and to Syria.

So that is why I say that even though the Congress is an ill-fitted tool to deal with this, the Congress must step up to the plate and move forward.

[Applause.]

And I want to congratulate particularly Mr. Walter Jones. He and I have gotten to know one another. And you talk about a profile in courage--

CONGRESSWOMAN WOOLSEY: Yes.

SENATOR CLELAND: This man is taking enormous heat from his district and his party. But he has become a dear friend and a brother, because he's got his eye focused on his responsibilities as a United States Member of Congress. And he has written personally, and privately--every family that has lost a loved one in Iraq. And our President, and this administration, won't even let us see the caskets coming back.

So I think the time has come for the Congress to act and move this issue forward. Hopefully, it will have an impact.

CONGRESSWOMAN WOOLSEY: Thank you, Senator.

Now we have General Hoar. So we're going to veer from our questions and answers. And while the General is getting seated, let me tell you the order of my colleagues questions and answers.

We'll have Meehan, Doggett, Hinchey, Schakowsky, Olver, Kucinich, Rangel, DeFazio--Honda I think left--and Barney Frank.

Oh--who else came? Oh, Neil Abercrombie. Thank you.

General Hoar, thank you for putting us into your busy schedule.

General Joseph Hoar is here to testify--and I so appreciate you. He is retired from the Marine Corps in September 1994. His last active duty assignment was Commander-in-Chief of the United States Central Command, MacDill Air Force Base, Florida. Today, General Hoar will discuss America's military operation in Iraq, and the need for a paradigm shift to ensure that we do achieve stability in Iraq while we're going forward.

Thank you so much.

STATEMENT BY GENERAL JOSEPH HOAR

GENERAL HOAR: [Off mike.] [Inaudible.]--opportunity to testimony before this group today. Is it on now? Okay. And I applaud the purpose of this hearing.

I should begin my testimony by again pointing out that the Iraq adventure is the wrong war at the wrong time, waged with extraordinary incompetence by the civilian leadership of our country.

[Applause.]

Despite all of this, our magnificent armed forces continue to serve with courage and determination, with great personal sacrifice. "Success," as defined by our civilian leadership three years ago, is out of reach. However, there is still the possibility that a stable pro-Western Iraq can take its place in the community of nations.

If this were to come about, it would be because our political leadership has realized that this counterinsurgency campaign, this civil war, is all about politics and ideas and religion. It cannot be won by killing Iraqis. Were that possible, the over 25,000 Iraqis killed already might have been enough.

We need a paradigm shift that places a major political figure in charge in Iraq as a special envoy; one who can guide U.S. policy through the ratification of the constitution, and the election of a new government in January. The emphasis must be on the political success of these signal events; events that must be supported by a major security effort, and a development effort--all coordinated to move the political process forward.

Militarily, the highest priorities are to protect the political process, and to train Iraqi military and security forces. Search-and-destroy operations, in which U.S. forces are withdrawn after an area is cleared must stop. After the election, trained Iraqi forces, and the protection of the new government are the highest security priorities.

Development projects should give an opportunity to work to anybody that wishes to be employed. Our country has apparently forgotten our experience of the CCC during the 1930s, in which tens of thousands of unemployed Americans were put to work on public works projects. Construction of sewers, roads, bridges and buildings all are possible with skilled and unskilled Iraqi workers.

Pressure to improve the efficiency and the equipment of Iraqi security forces must be increased--by the Congress. Well-trained and equipped Iraqi security units should be able to take over most security missions outside the Sunni triangle next year. In the following year--2007--combat support and combat service support units necessary to support Iraqi combat formations should be trained and equipped. By this time, a much smaller U.S. presence should be required.

I should emphasize that this is an optimistic view. It is possible that even with limited success in 2007, that a new threat will emerge that will demand our attention.

The invasion of Iraq has created a force of thousands of jihadists in Iraq where none existed over two years ago. Even if stability comes to Iraq, these battle-hardened extremists will migrate to other countries. Jordan, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Israel will all be endangered. As we draw down the U.S. forces in Iraq, contingency planning must begin to come to the aid of friendly countries which could be destabilized by terrorists trained in the cauldron of Iraq, and who are now seeking to overthrow other governments in the region.

This last possibility reflects the unintended consequences resulting from the conduct of this unnecessary war in Iraq.

I look forward to your questions, Madam Chairman.

CONGRESSWOMAN WOOLSEY: Thank you. Thank you very much, General, for

coming. Thank you.

[Applause.]

As everybody heard, we have a two-part vote. So what I'm going to suggest is that Congressman Meehan and Congressman Doggett--we go through their testimony and come back with phase two, with Hinchey, Schakowsky, Olver, Kucinich, Rangel, DeFazio, Frank, Kaptur, Tierney, Abercrombie.

So, go ahead--Mary Meehan from Massachusetts.

CONGRESSMAN MEEHAN: Thank you very much, and I commend you for taking the time to hold this hearing. And I thank the distinguished panel of guests, and appreciate hearing your thoughts.

I am a member of the House Armed Services, and have been following our involvement in this war closely over the last three years. And I want to say that the Congress' performance of oversight has simply been disgraceful. There has been \$250 billion without any kind of substantive discussion such as the one we're having today, and it's inexcusable and indefensible.

Yesterday's deadly attacks remind us of the urgent need to develop an exit strategy in Iraq.

I just returned from a 10-day trip to the Middle East. And the primary topic on the minds of every foreign country--most American officials who I met with--was Iraq. The rationale has gone from being about weapons of mass destruction, to removing Saddam Hussein, to trying to build a democratic Iraq. But the reality of this war is it is creating new terrorists, and creating a severe negative public impression of the United States in the Muslim world.

Last January, returning from a trip to the Middle East to visit our brave men and women in Iraq and Afghanistan, I issued a 20-page white paper, which I called "The Light at the end of the Tunnel: Developing an Exit Strategy for Iraq." Significantly, what the exit strategy addressed was: how do we achieve those goals which we could achieve and announce a timetable of withdrawal of U.S. forces in the beginning of 2006? The paper singled out that the training of Iraqi security forces was our top priority, and suggested that the long-term American role in Iraq not be military occupation, but an international reconstruction effort.

In July we saw a leaked memo from the British government indicating that Americans are planning to cut the force from 140,000 to 66,000 by mid-2006. The memo described a strong U.S. military desire to hand over control to the Iraqi forces in 16 out of 18 provinces.

This past Monday, Iraqi President Talabani said that the United States could withdraw as many as 50,000 troops by the end of the year. And Talabani said that there are enough Iraqi forces trained and ready to begin assuming control in cities throughout the country.

Yet the Administration again has refused to level with the American people and come forward about what the plans are for withdrawals, and whether they're going to happen. And I think this dishonesty needs to stop. The American people deserve better.

Iraq has been counterproductive in the struggle against violent extremism.

What I'm interested in--it seems to be a basic difference in philosophy. I believe, fundamentally, that our occupation has fueled the insurgency. You can look at the numbers, and that's clear: the insurgency has grown dramatically.

The Administration seems to think if we announce a withdrawal policy, that that will fuel the insurgency. I believe that announcing that we don't intend permanent occupation--that, in fact, we intend to leave the country--actually will help us in terms of the insurgency.

And I wonder--to that issue--that seems to me to be the crux of it. They say the insurgency

will be fueled or emboldened by us saying we're going to leave. I believe the opposite. I believe saying we don't intend permanent occupation actually will help us control the insurgency.

I was wondering if the members of the panel could comment?

GENERAL HOAR: David, did you want to--

AMBASSADOR MACK: Well--yes, I clearly believe that we should announce that our intention is to leave Iraq, and to have a diminishing military presence, and to not remain unless it is with the agreement of the Iraqi government.

I am skeptical about setting a specific timetable, because I think that our experience in the past has been that setting a date certain invites problems--both in terms of encouraging opponents, and demoralizing the people that we want to work with as allies.

CONGRESSWOMAN WOOLSEY: General Hoar, did you have a response?

GENERAL HOAR: Well, I would agree with you, sir, in this regard: I think that it is quite necessary that the government make a declarative statement about what our long-term aims are there, with respect to permanent bases, and also oil.

Because in my experience in the Middle East, as I travel there frequently, rumors abound. And the question of whether or not we're going to stay there, and whether or not we're after Iraqi oil--the second largest reserve, second only to Saudi Arabia--always come up in discussions.

And I have the same reservations that David does, since the insurgents are really on the strategic defensive, and they're there to outlast us. We should be thinking about a way to bring these forces home. But I think putting dates on specific withdrawals only encourages the bad guys to outlast us--particularly when our horizon is 2006, or 2007 and so forth.

MR. SHALLAL: Yes, if I could add also one more thing--I think the one thing that would help also defuse the insurgency is the idea of creating a government that has some credibility with the Iraqi people. It is not helpful when you have someone like President Talabani come here and say something, only to retract it the next day standing next to President Bush. He feels and looks like a puppet. It just doesn't look good.

The other thing is: we have to stop sort of cherry-picking the information we hear and where the information comes from. There's a lot of information out there that's providing a different point of view than what the Administration is looking for. For example, the Council--the Committee--the National Sovereignty Committee that just came out recently. This will be buried somewhere. This will not be talked about--where they said we need to end the occupation.

There was a lot of very credible and powerful voices in Iraq that have spoken about ending the occupation, about putting a timeline. And those voices have been ignored. And they're only fueling the insurgency even further when we do that.

CONGRESSWOMAN WOOLSEY: Thank you.

Congressman Lloyd Doggett, Texas.

CONGRESSMAN DOGGETT: Thank you very much. And thank you for your leadership in convening this hearing.

I don't believe there is a one of us who has come to the hearing who would not be willing to share the dais with those who are still making excuses for the Administration, who serve here in Congress. And I know our panel, which has expressed divergent views about these difficult issues, would be pleased to share it with representatives of the Administration who are still trying to define new excuses for why they're doing what they're doing in Iraq.

But as Congressman Meehan just has indicated, the problem we have here is that the nearest thing that we have to a hearing on these matters is simply a pep rally for Administration policies. And so we must convene in this forum to be able to have the kind of thoughtful difference of opinion about how to extricate ourselves from this disaster.

Second point I think is important to make is that time is of the essence. With another 150-plus people being killed tomorrow, we cannot afford ideological purity. And I would direct my remarks particularly to those who shared my opposition to this Resolution for war in the first place. Those who think they must re-convince themselves are misdirected. We need to be reaching out to people like Walter Jones. We need people of both parties, and no party.

We do not need people who agree about everything. We can settle for those who agree about nothing but the importance of altering our policy in this regard.

I have really two questions. I represent--Senator Cleland--some of the poorest part of Texas, and of our country--particularly poor Hispanics who are providing much of our Marines and our other armed forces that are there serving. And as I go out trying to broaden the circle of people who understand what's wrong here, the cry that I know you've heard in Georgia and around the country is: "We've got to support our troops."

It is ironic that the people who yell that the loudest here in Washington are the ones who supported our troops by sending them off without adequate armor; who supported our troops by sending them off without securing the munitions dumps from which the bomb-making materials and weapons that are being used to kill them each day are drawn. But that cry is out there.

What's your response about how it is you can call for an abrupt change in our policy in Iraq, and still support our troops?

SENATOR CLELAND: Thank you very much.

I once had a private meeting with General Colin Powell. And he went to--I said, "How you doing?" He said, "Well, it's been a tough day." He said, "I went to speak to a civic group." And he said, "Afterwards, a man came up to me and said, 'General, you don't sound very much like a hawk.'" And he said, "Well, all due respect, sir, I get paid to give the best advice I can to the President of the United States on how to use the American military to stay out of war--but if we get in war, win and win quickly."

The first purpose of the American military is to use it to stay out of war--not to get people killed. So the best way to support the troops is to keep them out of war. Step number one.

Number two: if you go to war, you have a strategy to win, and a strategy to get out, and you do it quickly. None of that has occurred here.

So we're bleeding ourselves to death in the deserts of Iraq. We're not supporting the troops that way. Because we don't have a strategy to win.

This President, and this civilian leadership, fired General Shinseki, who said it would take 500,000 troops to go in. They disregarded the briefing of General Tommy Franks, head of CENTCOM, when he said it would take 500,000 troops to do this. They disregarded all that. They dissed it.

And now they have only a fifth of the troops necessary to secure Iraq. No wonder we're not winning hearts and minds. No wonder the insurgency is growing by our presence. We're just enough there to do enough damage. And, as General Hoar says, we're just on the strategic defensive. That's Viet Nam all over again.

And so, we got our troops in a shooting gallery. That's not supporting the troops. You either

have a strategy to win, or a strategy to get out. And if you really do it right, you have both.

So--we're down to an exit strategy here. And that's supporting the troops. And that's what I've concluded.

CONGRESSWOMAN WOOLSEY: Professor?

DR. CHAYES: My own view is that we've got to have benchmarks that are not inflammatory, in terms of withdrawal in order to meet the need to withdraw and, at the same time, not increase the insurgency to wait us out. And I think primary among the benchmarks is obviously, as we've discussed, replacing American troops with trained Iraqi troops.

So I think what we've got to emphasize is that the security of the training police, and the training troops is absolutely foremost, and we will do everything to make sure they are protected and not blown up as they have been--as many have been. So I think that, of course, is the benchmark--the primary benchmark.

And there are others that show that we will use our military strength to make sure these benchmarks are achieved. That has to be the exit strategy--not a timetable.

CONGRESSMAN DOGGETT: The second concern I hear as we try to expand the circle of understanding about this disastrous course is the feeling that it can get worse there; that as bad as things may be, as deep as the misrepresentations may have been that got us there in the first place, that if American troops are withdrawn, we will reward terrorism--as the Administration is always claiming--and that we will have a more explosive situation than the daily death count we hear about now.

What's your reaction to that concern?

GENERAL HOAR: I'd like to respond to that.

I think it's almost a certainty that we're going to have a greater disruption as a result of this invasion. We have so disrupted the nature and the fabric of the Iraqi society--with incompetence, mismanagement--the damage that has been done already in that society is enormous.

And I must say that I think that the whole region is going to be destabilized as a result of it. You have this Shiia-Sunni split. You have Kurdish issues that Turkey will not stand still for if the Kurds secede. There are so many problems that exist that are just waiting to bubble up right now.

There is a civil war going on right now. I don't think anybody would deny that. And it is somewhat mitigated by the presence of the U.S. forces, but it is certainly there.

CONGRESSMAN DOGGETT: Thank you.

CONGRESSWOMAN WOOLSEY: Thank you.

SENATOR CLELAND: May I respond to a couple of things? I agree with representative Meehan.

I was on the 911 commission for a year, and the truth of the matter is that back to bin Laden, which we ought to be talking about--it's bin Laden's thesis in the Muslim world that the West seeks to occupy Arab lands, and Muslim lands. And the longer we stay there, we just create recruits for him. He is now recruiting--as General Hoar has pointed out, in terms of other countries, he is now recruiting and sending his people who have been trained in Iraq to Afghanistan.

So the point is here: we're not doing any good by our presence there. We're not stopping a civil war. There's not enough troops on the ground to do that. We're not securing Iraq. We're not providing them the basic services. We're just getting our people killed, and a bunch of them, too. And we're just serving as a training ground for Osama bin Laden to send his people elsewhere.

So that's the reason that withdrawal of American forces--hopefully, with some other presence,

either the U.N. or NATO or both--will helps not only reduce the insurgency and the rationale for Osama bin Laden and his terrorist cadre--and others--to be mad at us, but also will help us redirect our resources to where the source of this is--which is, in so many ways, bin Laden and Al Qaeda, that is now morphing into some 60 different countries.

CONGRESSWOMAN WOOLSEY: Thank you.

Maurice Hinchey, New York.

CONGRESSMAN HINCHEY: Thank you very much, Lynn. And lady, and gentleman, I want to thank you very much. This has been a very interesting experience, to listen to your statements. I think they are ver well informed, very well reasoned. And I think that they bring to our intention numerous points which we need to be attentive to.

Those of us who voted against the war Resolution when it was presented to the Congress did so for a number of reasons, including that we anticipated the kind of circumstances that we're presently experiencing: that there would be a division between the Sunnis and the Shiias; that the Kurds would seek opportunities to set up their own country; the result would be some form of civil war outbreak; and the consequences of that were very, very difficult to ascertain, but we knew that they would be tragic.

And that is exactly what is unfolding.

More and more we are seeing people draw relationships between the circumstances that we're experiencing in Iraq and those that we experienced in Viet Nam--the kind of quagmire, the kind of inability to do anything meaningful, just kind of stuck in one place, and trying to justify the experience there by naming body counts: "Yes, we suffered these many losses today, but we killed this many number of the insurgency." It's the same kind of thing.

But the big difference is that the consequences of this experience are going to be much more adverse than the consequences of Viet Nam. There is no way of getting out of this situation clean, no matter how we do it. If we stay there, it is going to be a terrible mess. When we leave, it is likely also to be a mess.

The only thing that we can do is mitigate that mess prior to leaving--by being intelligent about it, by being reasonable about it. And not by doing the kinds of things that this Administration apparently wanted to do in the first instance, which was to occupy the entire Middle East: use Iraq as a staging ground, and the next target would be Iran, Syria--and who knows where from there.

Their plan, of course, has resulted in disastrous consequences, and we're seeing that not only in Iraq but in Afghanistan, as well. The insurgency in Afghanistan is growing.

We talk about the need to bring in additional people--more NATO forces, particularly, more members of NATO--because we know that they are the strongest and the most likely to be with us. But the fact of the matter is that they're saying, well, I'm not sure that we want to stay involved in this. They're not interested in getting involved in anti-insurgency activities in Afghanistan.

I was in Afghanistan right after the bombing stopped. And as I was leaving Kabul I saw this group of German forces coming in from Behram Air Base. And it frankly gave me a sense of enthusiasm and hope that, first of all, we had done something which was right, I thought in the first place, going after Osama bin Laden--as you have said, Senator. We went after him, we went after the Taliban that were providing him with the safety and security that he relied upon. And they were the ones who attacked us. So we had every justification for doing so. And the Administration, I thought, acted properly. They gave them time. They said to the Taliban: "Turn over the Al Qaeda network to us, because they hurt us badly. You turn them over to us, and we won't give you any trouble." But the

Taliban refused to do so, and so we had no alternative. We had to go after them.

But what's happening now is: those German forces, and the other forces that came into Afghanistan are telling us: "We're not here to be engaged in counterinsurgency activities. And if you guys think that that's what you're going to be doing here, then I think you can begin to count us out, because we're going to be leaving." And that's what we're seeing--so-called great "coalition forces," which was a big hoax to begin with in Iraq, has essentially disappeared, with just a few countries--the British, principally--just hanging on. And even they are about to leave.

So, we're facing one of the most difficult and dangerous dilemmas in the history of our country. Whatever we do, the fact that Iraq has become a magnet for Al Qaeda and for radical Muslim insurgents training for discipline, or revving them up means that they are going to spread out in other places, as they have begun to do already. We've seen it in Madrid, we've seen it in London, we've seen it in Egypt. And we will see more of that.

We are facing a very tough situation. And this administration shows no signs of understanding the complexities and the dangers of this problem. This administration, I think, is probably one of the most corrupt and incompetent administrations in the history of our country. I don't expect to see anybody shaking their head up and down on that one.

[Laughter.]

But I know that--

[Applause.]

--that's the way I feel about it.

[Applause.]

And no matter what we do, no matter what action we take, we're going to find ourselves in tough circumstances--and others around us.

Senator, you said that Congress is an ill-fitted tool. And, boy, Congress has certainly shown itself to be an ill-fitted tool for this.

But the fact is that Congress should not be an ill-fitted tool. The Constitution gives a clear role for Congress here. We have an Administration that is so bumbling, so stupid, so incompetent, so corrupt--getting us in such deeper and deeper trouble--Congress is obliged to act.

So--that would be my question: what should the Congress be doing now? What kind of action should this Congress be taking immediately to try to extract us from these circumstances?

[Applause.]

DR. CHAYES: I think Senator Cleland has got his finger on a political strategy--surprise, surprise--

[Laughter.]

CONGRESSWOMAN WOOLSEY: You mean that you agree with him, or that he's come up with it?

DR. CHAYES: No! No! I'm saying I'm not surprised.

I mean, basically what he is saying is: refocus on the war; for the Democrats to force a refocus on the war on terrorism.

And, you know, I have been hearing--my daughter, Sarah Chayes, who is an NPR correspondent, has been in Afghanistan for three years. And she says the situation is getting far worse; that the Pakistanis are encouraging Taliban incursions into the south, where she is, in Kandahar.

So it's not just "not finding" Osama bin Laden. There are real attempts--there's some idea--

that the Americans are supporting the--quote--"good Taliban"--tell me who they might be.

So a strategy to refocus on terrorism, and to mitigate the effects of creating terrorism and expert jihadists in Iraq is, I think, where the Democrats should be.

Representative, Woolsey, I think you've got the wind at your back on this one. I really do. I'm hearing--everywhere--discussed, and a question why we are--you know, why is the National Guard there? Why wasn't it in New Orleans?

So I think there's a strategy to be captured. And I must say the Democrats have been pretty passive about all of this. And it's time to refocus.

CONGRESSMAN HINCHEY: I hear that often--let me just interject--that the Democrats have been pretty passive.

The Democrats have been trying to get attention to dealing with this in alternative ways, but it's virtually impossible to get any of that into the American media these days--virtually impossible. And, of course, the very dictatorial way in which the Republicans have operated this Congress is absolutely shocking--particularly the House of Representatives. You don't see any debate on any important bills on the floor of the House of Representatives anymore. The debate time is restricted. You can't offer amendments.

And so the opportunities to discuss these issues--which is what the House of Representatives was created for, as a basic opportunity for the people of our country to discuss the most important issues confronting us--has been shut off by the Republicans in the House of Representatives, because they are working in concert with the White House.

We are experiencing now, in this country--for one of the few times in our history--a unilateral government. Separation of powers has broken down. The oversight responsibilities of the House of Representatives has completely been abolished: What do you want, Mr. President? Yes, we'll do it. Just name it, Mr. President, and we'll do it. You don't want this brought up? It won't be brought up. You don't want this discussed? it won't be discussed.

That's the situation that we're confronting here today.

So what should we be doing? What should this Congress be doing?

CONGRESSWOMAN WOOLSEY: Ambassador Mack?

AMBASSADOR MACK: Well, I am aware of the dilemma that you have here, as opposed to the Senate, where there has been serious, probing, bilateral discussion--particularly in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

How can that be translated into something that makes the Administration take serious notice? Well, I think probably you're getting an answer from a lot of your Republican colleagues who are coming back from the August recess, having talked to their constituents. And that may bring some pressure on the Republican leadership here that they haven't felt before.

But I, for one, think that--I know there are people in the Administration who would welcome the challenge of having to actually come up with a disengagement strategy that would be shared with the Congress and the American people. This is not the view of the Administration's leadership. There are plenty of professionals in the career military, the State Department, the CIA, who would welcome having that challenge from the Congress.

And so I should think that a Sense of Congress Resolution--whether it originates in the Senate or here--that called upon the President to provide--to share with the Congress and the people a disengagement strategy for Iraq would make a lot of sense.

CONGRESSMAN HINCHEY: Anyone else? Dr. Katzman?

DR. KATZMAN: [Off mike.] [Inaudible.]

[Laughter.]

GENERAL HOAR: Okay--I'd like to have a shot at it. I'm not constrained by any of these other problems.

I would certainly support your description of the ineptness of this government in prosecuting this war--with a total lack of ability at self-examination and correction as they went forward. There might have been a chance, at some time, to have gotten out with a whole skin. But the opportunity to have done that has largely been dissipated, in my judgment.

I think that what is going to change the calculus--and you alluded to this--is there are elections next year. And there are people in the House that have seen that the wind has changed. I see it among my colleagues--retired military people--who are, by their very nature, conservative--that would not have voted for a Democratic candidate in 2004. But I think many of them will feel very differently as a result of what is going on today.

CONGRESSWOMAN WOOLSEY: Thank you very much.

I was going to, for the benefit of the media, explain where my colleagues had fled. We are in the middle--at the end of a vote, I believe; a two-part vote down on the House floor. And now we're currently coming back together.

I was going to offer our panel a break, but if it's all right with you, we'll just keep going right through it. And I was going to offer a group that's here to provide me with a petition, time in the middle, but I think we'll just go right on until we have no further Members of Congress to ask question. We won't have time, then, for the wonderful petitions you're going to bring me.

So--John Olver, from Massachusetts.

CONGRESSMAN OLVER: Thank you, Madam Chairman, for bringing this group together. And I very much appreciate it. I wasn't here for the first couple of testimonies, but what I have heard--every time one of the Members on the panel has spoken, there has been wisdom. If we could put that together and figure out how, then, to direct it, we would have learned a great deal and gained a great deal.

On the whole, I think the words that best characterize what I've been hearing is that we have a quagmire headed toward a sink-hole--in its simplest form.

Within a month, we're going to have an election--a referendum on a constitution--by the 15th of October. That constitution has had very little involvement from the Sunni portion of the populace--and maybe from other pieces of the populace. I'm not really familiar with it precisely.

It will be declared a win. And I would be curious if one or more of you--maybe several of you--would like to comment as to the legitimacy of that, since it does sort of violate what several of you have said while I have been here, that there needed to be a respectful involvement of all portions of the population in the first place.

What is your assessment of the legitimacy of that? And what do you think happens thereafter? Thank you.

DR. KATZMAN: I'll start. I've raised it--this issue--a few times.

We are seeing a very high registration in the Sunni areas to vote on this constitution. It is for the purpose of voting against it. That's what we're hearing. We don't know what they'll actually when they vote October 15th.

We have registration rates of 85 percent in some cities--I think Baquba, 85 percent. Even, you

know, Fallujah, Ramaji, we're seeing very high Sunni desire to go out and vote against it.

The problem is: if two-thirds of the voters in any three provinces vote against it, it gets voted down. The Sunnis have very high population majorities in Anbar Province and Salahadin Province. They have narrower majorities in Diala and Ninevah Province--which means they may fail to get the two-thirds needed to defeat it, in which case they may become even more embittered that they tried and failed to defeat the constitution.

But it may be viewed as a legitimate referendum because they are registering in such high numbers.

CONGRESSMAN OLVER: But could the defeat lead to some of the things that people have suggested as ways of getting out of the quagmire?

DR. KATZMAN: It is possible that if it's defeated--if it is defeated, and there is then an election for another transitional national assembly, and more Sunnis get elected there and then try to re-write the constitution, with more Sunni involvement, it is possible. I'm not betting on it, but it is possible that that series of events could lead to more Sunni inclusion and perhaps a diminution of the insurgency. I'm not betting on it, but it is possible.

AMBASSADOR MACK: My own view, Representative Olver, is that it would have been far preferable to have stuck with the original intention that there would be a requirement for a consensus vote, including the Sunni representatives in the constitutional convention.

At the end of the day, the large Shiia majority, together with the Kurds, decided that they had talked long enough. They did not seek the six-month postponement that they could have sought. They basically decided to move ahead.

Because of that, I think we are facing the kind of dilemma that Dr. Katzman described. The likelihood is that this constitution will pass, but it will pass by a very narrow margin in a couple of governorates--which is to say it won't have a two-thirds vote against. And, as a result, you're going to have a permanently embittered Sunni minority that has tended, by and large, to be sympathetic to the insurgency.

So I think that the outcome, at this point, looks pretty dim.

CONGRESSMAN OLVER: Thank you.

I would point out that this could have been anticipated--in a country that is 95 percent tribal, in which two major portions of the population have been oppressed through colonialism by the British, and then by a series of governments, ending with Saddam Hussein--that there is now a time to get even. And the question that the Sunnis are going to be given full representation, and given an equal share, or 20 percent share as they represent in the population, I think is a fantasy.

I think that the Kurds and the Shiia have entered into an agreement to grant each other what they want in that country, and the plan is to cut the Sunni out. And we're in for heavy rolls.

AMBASSADOR MACK: Well, yes, Representative Olver--I think that we ought to, as a government, be insisting upon the kind of high-level international mediation that would work to bring together the dissident Sunni leaders with the people who are dominating the government. That would require something that this administration has not done so far, which is to surrender power and control over this foreign aspect of the political process to other members of the international community.

But, frankly, I think it would be highly desirable. And I think, at the end of the day, since the Iraqis appear to be failing within their own un-aided efforts they appear to be failing to achieve national reconciliation, they are going to need some kind of foreign intervention.

We have shown that we either cannot or will not provide the necessary mediation help. So I think it's time for us to stand aside--but to give full support to a broad international coalition that would support a high-level mediator.

CONGRESSWOMAN WOOLSEY: Let me thank you. Thank you.

Let me give you the order, Members. We have Tierney, DeFazio, Kaptur, Watson, Lee--in that order.

Mr. Tierney, from Massachusetts.

CONGRESSMAN TIERNEY: Thank you very much, Lynn. And thank all of the witnesses for their participation today. And I apologize, because we were going out for votes and back, if I'm retreading some ground that's already been covered.

The bases that the United States is building in Iraq--both the number of them and the size of them--what impact do you think it has had, with the fact that that construction is going on? And what impact would it have with a clear and decisive statement that we have no intention of occupying them permanently, and at some point relatively soon, turning them back over to the Iraqi people?

Anybody that wants to respond.

GENERAL HOAR: I'd be happy to try and answer that.

I think, very briefly, that it's terribly important that there be a declarative statement on the part of the U.S. government: "We are not staying permanently--

[Applause.]

--and we have no interest in the oil."

[Applause.]

AMBASSADOR MACK: Yes. And I would add to that that, from the point of view of force protection and an orderly disengagement, we should be moving our forces out of the cities into some kind of temporary bases. But that will only deal with this strong belief that is prevalent, not only in Iraq but more widely in the Muslim world, that we intend those bases to be permanent.

So we would need to say, up front, that we are doing this for force protection, and to allow the Iraqis to take over the policing of the cities, but to be there for a temporary period of time to provide some necessary support. But these are not intended to be permanent bases, and our intention is to leave the country.

CONGRESSWOMAN WOOLSEY: All right.

CONGRESSMAN TIERNEY: I had one more question. I just wanted to make sure that nobody else wanted to answer that one.

The statement, if it were to be made, that the United States was going to withdraw the majority of its troops a date certain, or within a relatively defined period of time--what impact do any of you believe that would have on two factors: one, the rest of the international community realizing that perhaps it's in their best interest to step forward and take more aggressive action--whether it's in training troops or protecting the borders; and, two, would it have an impact at all on the Iraqis themselves and their approach to standing up armed forces and military and police?

GENERAL HOAR: I think it's very dangerous to have a date certain. The insurgents are there to outlast us. And if we say "2007," they'll make sure that they'll be still there at 2007 when it comes time to leave.

The country's the size of California. There aren't enough troops to police that country. There never have been. We all know that. They'll outlast us.

We need to tie all of this--as Professor Chayes said a little while ago--to milestones; events that take place that allow us to say we have Iraqis in the south, we have Iraqis--the Kurds--in the north that are taking care of their own area. We need American forces in Anbar Province. We need an American presence in Baghdad.

I think that, for example, when we can withdraw major forces from geographic points, I think then those troops ought to come home. But I think it should be driven by our success in training Iraqi forces, and working with them--with American advisors, with U.S. units, stationed so they can be committed to help out if they get into serious trouble--as a transition until we leave entirely.

CONGRESSWOMAN WOOLSEY: Any more responses to Congressman Tierney.

Dr. Katzman, and then Mr. Shallal.

DR. KATZMAN: Thank you.

I just wanted to, again, give an answer on the Iraqi security forces, to clear up what I think are a lot of misconceptions.

Yes, we are building Iraqi security forces. But I think all the reporting that's out there suggests that these forces are really loyal to their party leaderships that asked them to be recruited into the national forces.

We also have another dilemma. You have largely Shiite and Kurdish forces that are policing Sunni cities in Iraq now--Anbar Province, obviously, Salahadin and others. These Iraqi forces do not have the hospitality of the local population. They are viewed as occupiers, usurpers--whatever.

It is very doubtful that, without substantial U.S. help, that these forces would hold those cities. I'm very doubtful they will be able to hold those Sunni cities. So we will, I think, inevitably see Sunni policing--Sunni takeovers--of their own cities. That may not happen while we're there, but inevitably, I think, that's what's likely to occur.

CONGRESSWOMAN WOOLSEY: Mr. Shallal.

MR. SHALLAL: I would respectfully disagree with the General's view about not setting a deadline or a timeline. I think it's important.

No matter when we pull out, the insurgents are going to be there. It's their country. So if we pull out next year, or five years from now, they're still going to be there. They may become part of the population, they'll become part of the ruling class, sometimes, even. But they're going to be there.

People are not born insurgents. They become insurgents--when there is a problem, when they are deprived.

You know, we have to start focusing on alleviating the hardships that the Iraqi people have. And until we do that, the insurgency will continue to grow.

It doesn't take a panel to figure that out--honestly. It's a simple, human issue. If you don't have, you get frustrated, and then you join a resistance if a resistance is building there.

But, unfortunately, the presence of the U.S. and the U.S. troops has been perceived as being--they have become the bad guys. They're not the guys with the white hats anymore, that they were perceived at the beginning.

All the missteps that have taken place throughout this whole process have caused the Iraqis to believe that they're really not there for their own good, but they're there to destroy.

So we have to re-tool, re-function--redo something with our military--to make them become more the peacemakers that they ought to be, rather than the warriors than they've been taught to be.

CONGRESSWOMAN WOOLSEY: Thank you very much.

[Applause.]

We'll get a lot more conversation if we don't clap. So try not to do that--thank you.

For my colleagues that have joined us now--the new ones that weren't here earlier this morning, I'm going to insert Members who sat through the entire morning, that didn't speak. So the order has changed slightly.

So we have: Peter DeFazio, Jan Schakowsky, Rangel, Kaptur, and then we got to Watson, Lee, Waters. Okay?

Peter--who's been here three times, now.

CONGRESSMAN DeFAZIO: Yes, thank you, Madam Chair. I had to go to the floor to raise concerns about the Republicans' whitewash of the Katrina disaster. So that was why I left.

So--anyway, thank you for convening this meeting. You know, they can stick us in a small room and as far away as you can get from the Capitol, but I don't think they can cover up the concerns of the American people, and the constructive testimony we're hearing here--which should be heard in standing committees of Congress, but apparently won't be under this current leadership.

General, when you were responding to Mr. Tierney's question, and you said that we should make a declarative statement: "The bases aren't permanent and we have no interest in the oil."

Why do you think this Administration has not taken that step?

GENERAL HOAR: I don't want to speculate on why--

[Laughter.]

--they haven't. But it would seem to me that if this were true, that it would be an easy political step to put an end to the rumors that abound in that part of the world on those two issues: that we look for permanent bases, and we want to control that oil. I think it's that simple.

CONGRESSMAN DeFAZIO: Yes. It seems that way to me, too. But I've just been puzzled.

Is there anybody else who has a perspective on that? No? A little head shaking. Well--thanks.

There's this other argument--and there was some disagreement on the panel there, on what John raised, which is this sort of circular argument about what feeds the insurgency; who supports it and why they support it, and particularly at its current, very intense levels.

I mean, we've talked a bit about the sectarian differences and violence. But the question becomes--and I guess it's sort of two parts. One is: is there--how much of a foreign-fighter influence is there among the insurgents? And if there isn't a very substantial foreign-fighter influence, would sort of declarations like the General has talked about, and other steps that the U.S. could take to show that it clearly is not going to be there forever, you know, in terms of whether we're setting hard or soft deadlines, or goal-oriented deadlines for draw down of forces and withdrawal.

I mean, is that going to mitigate? Or is just too much of it internal, and we're the current target, as well as they're obviously killing--there are Iraqi targets--substantial Iraqi targets, too--and that will go on whether or not we're there, until they have a very robust security force.

That's kind of a long and complicated question, but if someone--

AMBASSADOR MACK: Madam Chairman--

CONGRESSMAN DeFAZIO: Go right ahead.

AMBASSADOR MACK: Well, it's my view--and I believe this would be substantiated by Dr. Katzman from CRS, that only a very, very small number of the insurgents--percentage terms--have come from outside Iraq. Some of them, however, have critical skills and critical commitment, that adds a lot to the insurgency.

But, generally speaking, what we're dealing with here are Iraqis who, for a variety of reasons, have a strong resentment--ranging from personal grievance to desperate poverty and simply having taken the job of being an insurgent, to Iraqi nationalism of various stripes.

Originally, I believe that the grievances of the insurgents were primarily against the U.S. forces. We were the foreign occupier. I think increasingly the insurgency is being mounted against what is viewed as an Iranian and Kurdish-controlled government; a government that does not represent Iraq in its Arab-nationalist sense that most of the insurgents adhere to.

CONGRESSMAN DeFAZIO: Other members? Senator?

SENATOR CLELAND: I do know that Al Qaeda and Osama bin Laden--who should be the focus of our war on terrorism, not Iraq--Al Qaeda and bin Laden are now using the war in Iraq as a training ground to send their trained operatives to Afghanistan to re-take Afghanistan.

Along the lines of General Hoar's point that what this is doing is providing a training and recruiting ground for spreading terror throughout the Middle East, and it actually increases the insecurity around the Middle East.

And so the quicker we withdraw, the quicker we become not the cause of the problem but more and more a part of the solution.

I think several things here that I've heard--one, more and more the importance of international institutions. Because when you leave, when you exit, you've got to turn it over to somebody. As we found out, if you're just in there alone, you've got to turn it over to the locals--whether it's--you know, we spend four years in Vietnamization, and lost 25,000 American troops. We're now into Iraqization. It's the same thing: slow, they get attacked, they get blown up, they become targets. And so it's going to be slow going and rough going. And we don't have--as we did have in Viet Nam 500,000 troops on the ground. We've got 130,000.

So it's going to be very, very difficult to base our timetable on someone else's coming up onto speed. Because we're part of the problem now, not necessarily part of the solution.

But--the Congress is not totally without power in taking care of those who have served. And I would say the first point to look at your power and authority, is to look at the underfunding of the Veterans Administration to the tune of \$3.5 billion, and increase that funding to take care of those who have served and who have borne the battle.

CONGRESSWOMAN WOOLSEY: Thank you.

Mr. Shallal.

MR. SHALLAL: Yes. The prisons in Iraq are teeming with prisoners right now--even Abu Ghraib. There are 14,000 prisoners in Iraq right now, of which only a hundred are foreign nationality.

And if the past is any indication of what's happening when the prisoners were there, the Red Cross indicated that 90 percent of the people that are in prison oftentimes are innocent.

You're pissing off an awful lot of people once they get released. 14,000 prisoners throughout Iraq.

CONGRESSWOMAN WOOLSEY: Okay. Wonderful, members.

Here's what--we're changing this just a little bit. We're supposed to be finished at 1:00-- at the very latest, 1:15, 1:30. I don't know how much longer the cameras can stay.

I'm going to ask you please to address your question to one of the panelists. And if any of the other panelists can't bear it unless you answer it, it's perfectly all right with us--then let us know. Okay? All right.

But here's the order: Schakowsky, Rangel, Kaptur, Watson, Lee, Waters, Payne, Kilpatrick. An I believe that will be the end, after Carolyn Kilpatrick.

So--Jan Schakowsky, Illinois.

CONGRESSWOMAN SCHAKOWSKY: Thank you, Lynn Woolsey, for organizing this hearing. And I thank the panelists so much for coming to our hearing of this nature and in this room, and to help us shed light on this important issue.

As we sit here today, the Bush Administration continues to talk about "progress" in Iraq. And the President stubbornly insists on defining the options--as has been mentioned--as "stay the course or cut and run."

But Americans, in fact, have lost faith with an administration that approached the U.S.'s greatest natural disaster with a "You're doing a great job, Brownie--"--the now discredited former FEMA head. And all Americans should really be frightened that the only thing different about Katrina and a terrorist attack is that Katrina actually gave us some warning. And so that's an answer to the question: are Americans really safer due to our involvement, now, in Iraq.

And I couldn't agree more, Mr. Shallal, about the necessity of separating--which many Americans do--the notion of the war on terror and the war in Iraq.

This is an administration--a President--who can't think of any mistakes he's made--unless forced to do so. And the fact that the President actually has now acknowledged that maybe there were some mistakes in Katrina suggests to me that things like this hearing, like Cindy Sheehan, like the disaffection of more Americans, in fact may result in some change.

So this is very important. In fact, most Americans now are saying that their choice for how do we fund Katrina: "Cut funds for the war in Iraq." 55 percent of Americans now say: start bringing them home.

Just a couple more comments, and then a quick question.

On Tuesday the President praised the draft constitution of the Iraqis. I guess it's evidence of "progress," so-called. But I just have to say that I am so concerned--and many American women that we met with are very concerned--that it has failed not only to engage the Sunnis as all of you have talked about, but has the real potential of stripping women of rights that they've had in Iraq for 50 years, and threatens religious minorities. And I understand the latest draft now has removed language requiring adherence to international treaties--something we should all be concerned about.

And so, as several of our panel have indicated, the Bush Administration has left us with no good options. But at least we ought to be asking the right question--which, at this late date is: how do we leave, and not how do we stay?

We need to have an exit strategy. We need to begin to withdraw troops now. And we're looking to the Administration--but we're also looking to you.

So--I don't know who the right person--so, maybe you know who the right person is to ask this.

I met yesterday with Dr. al-Hasani, the speaker of the Iraqi parliament. And he is a Sunni. And he was telling me that even the Sunnis that are being trained as part of a security force, when they come back are told there are no jobs for them; and believes that the greatest mistake was to cut them out--the de-Bathification process, as many of you have mentioned.

How can we--if anyone can answer this--is there a realistic way to--in an effective way now--engage the Sunnis? Is the United States presence a help or a hindrance to that? And is, in fact, that the key to looking forward towards some more stability and a real unification in Iraq?

CONGRESSWOMAN WOOLSEY: I've chosen Mr. Shallal to answer this question.

MR. SHALLAL: I think the one thing that needs to be made clear to the Sunnis is that the U. S. is not intent on splitting up Iraq. Because they'll end up with the smallest slice, and the one that's least viable.

And I think the way the constitution is written right now, with the idea of establishing regional governments really sets the stage for secession. And I think the Sunnis see that as a real possibility. So they're intent on rejecting this constitution for that very reason.

So, you know--the issue of women and all that all are very significant. But I think if there's one issue that ires the Sunni population, that is the issue of federalism and the way that it's being played out in Iraq. As opposed to, for example, having 18 states all have their own sort of--a little bit of autonomy, with a central government, there's been added a second layer, where you have these regional governments that make it extremely likely for the north and the south to secede.

CONGRESSWOMAN SCHAKOWSKY: And can that desire be satisfied, do you think? Is there any chance of it?

MR. SHALLAL: Well, no--not so far. I mean, I think the Sunnis have decided to withdraw from backing this constitution. And it's going to set up another milestone, just like the elections did, where it was looked at as being a power grab. You know, the set-up for what happened was clearly already there before it started to happen.

CONGRESSWOMAN WOOLSEY: Charlie Rangel, New York.

CONGRESSMAN RANGEL: Thank you, John. That's good. No more help needed.

[Laughter.]

I want to talk with Senator Cleland. I want to thank you publicly for the great sacrifices that you've made for our country. And I find it very interesting that this country is now seeking a diplomatic solution to the problems that our friends have in Iraq. But what surprises me is that there's no outrage in this country for the young men and women that are there--the over 1,800 that have died, over 12,000 that are wounded. And the fact that they come from the inner cities and the rural areas, and the Pentagon says, with great pride, that we're increasing the bonuses from 10 to 20 and 20 to 30 and now \$40,000, "because these people want to fight."

Now, it just seems to me that since they come from the area of the highest unemployment that if, indeed, the President was sincere in bringing liberty and freedom throughout the world, especially in the Middle East, that the sacrifice should be made by a broader cross-section of Americans who believe that that is our mandate. And whether it's a draft, or whether the President can make an appeal to the children of the CEOs, or the Pentagon, or the Congress, where everyone will believe that this is a mandate.

But it just seems to me that when the President says we're going to stay there until we win--and not one day longer, and the whole world knows that we cannot find a military victory, it bothers me that the country is willing to use other people's children to wait to see what happens politically, and what happens diplomatically.

And because I'm getting so old I have to try to get along more closely with the church because--

[Laughter.]

--their silence has really bothered me as to whether or not I'm on the right side of getting to heaven, because there's not a doctrine that I read that the taking of lives unlawfully and immorally when

it's not in defense of you or your country is probably one of the greatest sins that could possibly be committed. And this would include--

[Applause.]

--the tens of thousands of Iraqis that have committed no wrong.

And so, Senator, it seems to me that we could really end this war overnight if we had a draft in this country, where everybody had to serve, and everyone had to be placed in harm's way, while we go through this diplomatic procedure.

And I'd like to get your views on it. Because you and I know that whatever your motivation was to join the military, your job is not political. It is kill or be killed. And so therefore, they are the patriots. But we are the people that are placing them there.

SENATOR CLELAND: thank you very much for your service to our country, too. And I should probably do the thing that I always loved to do when I was a young army captain, and that was turn it over to the Marine Corps.

[Laughter.]

But I'll take the risk.

I think you pointed out something that has bothered me, and that is that now we're paying more money for young men and women to die than to live. I think we have to be very careful about that.

I happen to believe in the concept of the citizen-soldier, which is why I volunteered for Viet Nam, and why I was in ROTC, and those kind of things. There was a draft over our heads of my generation, but I figured it was my responsibility to take my place in the line. It was a moral choice to do that. It was a tough choice. And I paid a price for it.

That draft does not hang over the heads of these men and women of this generation. I have often wondered about where's the anger? Where's the passion out there, when their young friends--most of whom, that I have come across, are just good young men and women that would like an opportunity, and see the military as that.

It's interesting that 50 percent of all the casualties come from rural America. Fifty percent of all the casualties in Iraq come from rural America--the part of our country that probably has the least opportunity for jobs and advancement and higher education.

So there is a disproportionate sharing now. And we're seeing the American military, and the civilian leadership at the Pentagon want to pay more and more for people to re-up. I understand that a Special Forces sergeant--you get \$130,000 to re-up. That's moving very closely to a mercenary force; kind of an American foreign legion.

We have a total disconnect--and it's all volunteers, but they're paid big money to go wherever we send them, for whatever cause.

That's not America. That's not the American military. That's not the American way.

We should examine this at another time. Because there is a powerful disconnect here, between the sacrifice that is being made now, and those who are getting the tax breaks. Those who are getting the most tax breaks are not sending their young men and women to war in Iraq.

I know, in the State of Alabama--as in Georgia and around--big support for the troops. Rightfully so. Lots of stickers--lots of bumper stickers. But 60 percent of the people, in a poll recently in Alabama, don't want the draft. In other words, I'm quite willing to stand behind the troops as it's not my troop. And that's a disconnect.

And I happen to think--and one of the reasons I'm here for plugging an exit strategy--is that it

is immoral--immoral--and violates a right to life for these young men and women, to send young men and women into combat without a strategy to win, and without a strategy to get out. That it is immoral. And that's exactly where we are.

The President calls that "staying the course." I call it immoral. Because you cannot ask young men and women to continue to bleed and die in an open-ended conflict where they do not have a strategy to win, and they do not have a strategy to get out.

That is immoral.

And so--we're in one heck of a mess. I have worried about the disconnect for a long time. I supported--believe it or not--the concept of moving to an all-volunteer force at the end of the Viet Nam war, in '73 when President Nixon could not go to the Congress and re-up it because the draft had been so abused. And I knew it was. And we all knew it was.

So I supported the concept of the all-volunteer force because I said to myself: well, it will lead to a professionalism in the military--which it has. People will go in voluntarily--which they are. And one thing: it will limit the power of any future American President or Congress to commit this country and its troops to an open-ended war, because sooner or later you're going to run out of people. And that's exactly what we're facing now.

There is no way we can maintain the occupation of Iraq at the current level. There is no way we can--quote--"stay the course." We're throwing in almost everybody that is able-bodied in the Guard and Reserve, and now we realize we need the National Guard down in three states in Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana.

So we have committed our Reserves and our bottom-line defenses--all in the so-called war in Iraq. But that's not where the terrorists are. They're using that as a training ground to go into other places.

Al Qaeda is morphing into 60 different countries. We see attacks in Madrid. We see attacks in London. They're not all sitting there in Baghdad waiting for us to come after them.

So--we are in deep trouble, over committed, underfunded. And it is burning up the American military. Because as General Barry McCaffrey said about six months ago: the wheels are going to start coming off the United States army in another couple of years.

You may have noticed that the wheels are starting to come off the Guard. Recruiting is down 42 percent. The head of the National Guard, three or four months ago, said it was a broken force.

In terms of the Reserves, they're going into the inactive Reserves. That means they're really dipping down--to people that are 50 and 60 years old, and they're sending them to Iraq.

This is insane.

And then all of a sudden we get reminded: we have business at home that those entities ought to be dealing with.

So--we're out on a limb. And in terms of international entities--U.N., NATO--we work with those entities successfully. And one of the reasons we work with them successfully is they help us provide an exit strategy--not just in Iraq, but elsewhere.

So, we've missed the very way that we would get out of something like this when we went in. So there was no strategy to win. There was a strategy to take out Saddam Hussein, and a strategy to occupy the oil fields. That's the only strategy that there was.

We let 25 million people just go. Fired the army, disband every element of the social structure in Iraq. And now we're living in the mess that we've created.

And that is generating more terrorism. That is creating more insurgents.

I find--and you've been in combat, my dear friend--I find it very weird and strange, in this new concept of the American foreign legion, with this disconnect, where they're paid more and more bonuses, but the American people are connected to them less and less. I find it very strange. And you can imagine the feeling of the troops there--and I've talked to them--that they are attacked by people they don't even know. There's not even a name for them. They're just called "insurgents." And that's whoever blows me up today.

And then what blows you up? An IED. I'm in the Army, the Army comes up--just like the Marine Corps--with all kind of nomenclatures. And if it happens, it must have a nomenclature. "IED"--"improvised explosive device." What in the world is that? In Georgia, we call that a homemade bomb.

So here's the biggest, most strike-capability the United States has ever maintained. And we're bogged down in Baghdad and in Iraq with people we don't even know attacking us, with weapons that our youngsters can't even hardly name.

Now--that is immoral. And anybody wants to argue "right to life," I argue that those young men and women out there have a right to life, and one of the ways we can maintain that is to have an exit strategy that brings them home.

CONGRESSWOMAN WOOLSEY: Thank you very much.

[Applause.]

Well here's out list: Kaptur, Watson, Lee, Payne, Kilpatrick, Baldwin.

Marcy Kaptur, Ohio.

CONGRESSWOMAN KAPTUR: Thank you. Thank you very much, Chairwoman Woolsey. You've just done a superb job, and we have a stellar panel. And we thank you for coming to talk to the American people, through us, about the most important issue facing third country--and that is war and peace.

I have concerns that range from the integrity of our military, and what I see as a change by the Bush Administration in its historical purpose and integrity. I have diplomatic concerns, and I have economic concerns.

In terms of military, I have to say I think the Bush Administration's strategy is very clear. They single-mindedly went into Iraq and I believe are changing the purpose of our military, that causes this particular Member great, great concern--and replacing it with a contracted force--in many cases our military being used to support the contracted force.

And I think the Bush Administration direction is very clear. They do want to leave a mercenary force in the field. And they are willing to pay anything for it.

I do not believe that they are clear on who they want to own the oil. But I believe that is their target. And I'll tell you: when I saw the Americans hanging from the bridge, burned, in Fallujah, and I asked myself the question--not knowing who they were--where are the Marines? I come from a family of Marines. And then I realized, they weren't Marines. They were contractors.

So there are different rules of engagement operating in the field.

I began asking the question: how many contractors are in theater? First it was 25,000, then it was 50,000. Now I'm told there are over 100,000 contracted individuals somehow involved in the war in Iraq. I have been asked by members of the Ohio National Guard, who are doing fly-overs--"Congresswoman, is this what I trained for? To drop Halliburton contractors in Iraq?" What is going on with our military?

We have never had a war like this. This is not like Viet Nam. I doubt, sir--and Senator Cleland, I have the highest respect for you. I hope you know that. We didn't have this kind of contracted force in Viet Nam. And what my dear colleague Congressman Rangel has referenced--\$40,000 bounties? To recruit people in this country? This is an absolute violation of the principles of duty, honor and country that have guided our military from our founding.

I'll tell you: it scares me to my vitals, what they are doing with our military.

The second thing that scares me is our lack of diplomatic initiatives in the region. And I just want to place this on record, because I would like the panel to comment on the issue of what's happening to our military.

Yesterday I had the pleasure of meeting with our Syrian Ambassador, Ambassador Mustafa. And asked the question: is the Administration meeting with our Arab ambassadors? They are not. There is a communications blackout with a country that, frankly, is worried about another U.S. invasion--a country of only 12 million people. And it has taken me nine months, as a member of this Congress, to bring in four Ambassadors, who will come here at the end of this month to just brief Democratic Members of Congress on their views as Arabs--representatives of Arab nations--of what is happening in that part of the world; the ambassadors from Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and Egypt.

Something is wrong with the soup here in Washington--diplomatically, and it's going on with our military is our major concern.

Could you comment on that?

CONGRESSWOMAN WOOLSEY: Marcy, who would you like to have comment?

CONGRESSWOMAN KAPTUR: Well--Senator Cleland. Someone who--

CONGRESSWOMAN WOOLSEY: General Hoar.

CONGRESSWOMAN KAPTUR: I have never seen contractors at this level in a theater.

CONGRESSWOMAN WOOLSEY: General Hoar.

GENERAL HOAR: There have not been contractors, to my knowledge, in any place as we have seen them in Iraq. But, in truth, they were present in Viet Nam in large numbers. But they were always performing tasks to repair airplanes, do that kind of work.

The United States Army today does not have the capability to go to war without contractors. There is nobody to cook the food in the Army organization. That decision was made as an effort to reduce the cost of maintaining a large armed force. And so when an organization is in garrison today, whether he's at Fort Drumm, or at Fort Benning or wherever, there are civilian contractors that cook food and prepare it for them.

When the Army goes to field, they take meals-ready-to-eat, and then if they're going to get hot food, somebody has to go and be contracted to provide that kind of background.

Similarly, the construction of these cantonments, where the troops live, where they go back to when they're not on combat operations, have all been built by civilians. So there's large numbers.

But, in addition to that, of course--and I think what you're getting at--is the numbers of security people that carry weapons, which has--

CONGRESSWOMAN KAPTUR: General, might I just inject--may I just inject--

GENERAL HOAR: Of course.

CONGRESSWOMAN KAPTUR: Ambassador Bremer was not guarded by the U.S. military, but by private contractors. And they are doing more than preparing food. They are guarding the oil wells, they are performing military tasks in theater.

GENERAL HOAR: Not very well, I might add, with respect to the oil wells. But you're absolutely right. And this is a huge departure. But this is an effort to find a way to keep the troop strength down, and to keep the number of troops on the ground down at the level where the Secretary of Defense wants those numbers.

I don't know of any other answer to the question. Because they are performing the kinds of duties that in the past have been performed by soldiers and Marines for the most part.

CONGRESSWOMAN WOOLSEY: Thank you so much.

Diane Watson, California.

CONGRESSWOMAN WATSON: Thank you very much.

I am going to throw out some statements, and then I'll raise a question.

Is there anyone in this room that really believes we can win this war? And I have the greatest respect for our military because I taught children of the military in Okinawa. I taught children of the military in France. And I love our military and our military's children.

But what I see happening now: we are doing nation building, and we are occupying a sovereign nation. When we build--Ambassador Mack--the largest embassy in the world, costing us near a billion dollars, with the largest workforce of 5,000, that's a plan for occupation.

We have underestimated our enemy. Our enemy really was not Saddam Hussein. He was an enemy of his own people.

The enemy, I'm finding, is too smart, for they have outsmarted us. They are patient. And they have analytical minds, to be able to outsmart America and attack our own homeland from the air. They outsmarted us.

And they will always be there, whether we leave next week, or we leave the next century. You've got to understand that. We can say we've won the war. We should do what we did in Viet Nam. Just announce victory and we got out. And we think we ought to do that. I think we ought to have a withdrawal timeline.

What makes anyone think that the various ethnic groups aren't going to support their warlords and have a civil war--whether we leave in the next decade or 50 years from now? Because I have not heard one person come in front of any committee I'm on and talk about the way these people think. We don't know their belief systems. We don't know their mind set. And we have put our best and brightest and youngest in harm's way.

I want to raise this: I believe that the primary challenges our nation faces in confronting extremism and promoting democracy are defeating extremists ideas and ideologies, and our own ideologies get in the way from really understanding theirs.

Now, apparently we did this quite well during the cold war, because the great communicator was out there bringing our values forth. And I appreciated and respected what President Ronald Reagan was able to do.

And I fear, since that time, we have let our guard down. We no longer have the capacity to present our ideas and to undermine extremist ideas. We don't even support our own agencies that are there to protect our own people in time of need. We did not support them, because we cut the budget of FEMA.

So we rely more and more on military force from the end of a barrel rather than--Ambassador Mack--on our own diplomatic forces.

And I'm just going to end with this, and I'm going to go real quickly, Madam Chair.

CONGRESSWOMAN WOOLSEY: [Inaudible.]--question.

CONGRESSWOMAN WATSON: I'm going to do that. I've got to lead up to my question.

As you know, war is a blunt and messy instrument that often creates as many problems as it purports to solve. Case in point: Iraq. Where do we eliminate a secular extremist enemy and create an insurgency of religious extremists enemies?

So my question is: looking at the bigger picture, do we really have the capacity here to win the war of ideas, both in Iraq and around the world? And what changes do we need to make in our Federal government to build the capacity to wage a war of ideas as effectively as we did during the Cold War.

My question goes to Ambassador Mack.

AMBASSADOR MACK: Representative Watson, I welcome the chance to address that because it's a really serious issue that hasn't yet come up in this hearing.

The short answer is: no, we cannot win the war of ideas. And that's because the war of ideas is not--as the Bush Administration would have it--between us and them. It's not between the greatest democratic nation in the world that believes in freedom and human rights, versus people who hate freedom. The war of ideas is taking place within the over one billion Muslim community that's around the world.

The war of ideas will either be won by the extremists--as represented by the Osama bin Ladens and Abu Mussad Zarkowis, or it will be won by that vast majority--overwhelming majority--of Muslims who believe that their faith should be one of peace, of reconciliation, and of tolerance--at least for other people of the Book--people from the Abraham mythic tradition.

Unfortunately, the people within the Muslim world who ought to be showing the leadership on this have been slow to come forward. But they have been coming forward. A couple of months ago there was a very important ecumenical conference of Muslim leaders in Amman Jordan. And they represented all of the major sects and legal schools of Islam. And they agreed--for the first time, I believe, in Muslim history in recent centuries--they agreed on consensus resolutions that would certainly bind Muslims to a peaceful approach to conflict in their own countries, as well as conflict in the wider international scene.

I think there are these very good signs.

The United States government can and should be supporting the articulate, moderates within the Muslim world who are prepared to do this kind of thing.

CONGRESSWOMAN WOOLSEY: Barbara Lee, California.

CONGRESSWOMAN BARBARA LEE: Thank you very much. Let me thank you Congresswoman Woolsey for your leadership, and for pulling this together today. And thank all of the panelists for being here. Forgive me if my question is redundant, but we had a mark-up earlier, and I didn't get to hear all of your testimony. But I was happy to be able to read most of it.

Let me first say that I think most of us in the American public is beginning to realize that the withdrawal of United States forces is really key to United States national security interests. And I think the tragedy with regard to Hurricane Katrina has really put this on the front of everyone's agenda in terms of how vulnerable we are, as it relates to our domestic and our economic security.

The war and the occupation has made America less safe. Iraq now is a haven--and I think you have mentioned this earlier--it's a haven for terrorist, where it was not before the invasion and the occupation. And I believe that the American people are beginning to see these connections. Why in the

world are people suffering as a result of this hurricane? Why in the world is \$340-some billion being appropriated to a war that was unnecessary when, in fact, our domestic security--our people in America are totally vulnerable as a result.

Yesterday--and let me just mention this here because I want to commend Congressman Conyers and the whole Downing Street Memo proposal, because the President hasn't answered the letter that 120 Members of Congress sent to him way back in May. We held a hearing in the International Relations Committee around my Resolution of Inquiry. Every Democratic Member voted for that Resolution of Inquiry. And that was basically just asking the same questions that we asked of the President in the letter.

And so I think that's reflective of the tide that's beginning to turn in our country.

I guess the questions I want to ask you go right to the costs of the war, and because of the fact that it is such a privatized, commercial war--the commercial interests that are entrenched now in seeing this war move forward--how do we--or how will it be in their best interest, or how do we convince the commercial interests that it's in their best interests, in terms of the profits that they're making, to now begin to say that this is not the place to be to make billions of dollars. Because otherwise, we talk, and we want withdrawal.

They may not, because they're making so much money.

And secondly, let me just say--and to the General, I was happy to hear you talk about the "no permanent base" position. The Administration has rhetorically said that they don't want permanent bases. But they have not yet codified it. So we introduced a Resolution; H Con Res. 197, calling for just no permanent military base. And that's picking up some steam.

But one wonders why everyone in the Congress can't support such a resolution as that. And my take--and you may want to give me your feedback on that, because while the Administration won't codify, they say it, why wouldn't Congress just automatically say, "Look, minimally, you should just say 'No permanent bases. We don't have a long-term permanent interest.'"

In closing, let me just say my take in thinking about that is because Congress keeps appropriating the money. There's some disconnect between saying "We don't want a permanent military presence. We do not want to permanently occupy Iraq." Yet we're going to keep appropriating the money for the war.

So I think Congress is sort of caught, and can't really move forward until we begin to accept the fact that we need to withdraw; that this is a war that did not need to be fought. Too many of our young men and women are dying, and it is not in our national security interest.

CONGRESSWOMAN WOOLSEY: The General for response?

CONGRESSWOMAN BARBARA LEE: Yes. Thank you, General. Thank you very much.

GENERAL HOAR: My goodness. I would begin by saying that I think we're talk in a terrible dilemma. This war, in my judgment--as I said in my opening remarks--was unnecessary, in terms of what our priorities should have been: Afghanistan, defeating Al Qaeda, homeland security, progress on Israel and Palestine--all of those should have been higher priorities than going to war in Iraq.

The trouble is that by our presence there we have destabilized.

In a perfect world, I agree entirely with Mr. Shallal that we should be working much harder to convince the people in Iraq of our goodwill and so forth. And I think we should be doing it.

In the meantime, we now stand the possibility of destabilizing Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Kuwait and Israel--as a result of a premature departure from that part of the world.

And I'm not sure what the answer to that is.

But I think one of the answers is that we have got to find a way to bring this to a conclusion as quickly as possible.

CONGRESSWOMAN BARBARA LEE: And let me ask--the commercial interests, how is it a disincentive to leave?

GENERAL HOAR: I think that the only disincentive that you're going to find is next year at the polling booth. I think that when the American people go to vote, and they vote some of these people out of office--particularly in this House of Representatives--I think we'll have taken a major step towards that.

CONGRESSWOMAN BARBARA LEE: Thank you very much.

SENATOR CLELAND: Madam Chairman? Just a quick response?

I seem to remember that in the middle of World War II, that there was a standing committee that lasted about two years--Senate Committee--headed up by a young man who got into the question of war profiteering. And it was not termed "un-American" or "unethical." As a matter of fact, this young man--named Harry Truman--became Vice President in 1944, and President of the United States.

CONGRESSWOMAN WOOLSEY: We're going to have Donald Payne as our clean-up batter. But Sheila Jackson Lee is going to say one sentence.

[Laughter.]

CONGRESSWOMAN WOOLSEY: Go.

CONGRESSWOMAN SHEILA JACKSON LEE: Oh, he's--okay.

The first thing is to thank Representative Woolsey, and to let you know that my absence was not because of the lack of passion, but because Texas is an impact area for Hurricane Katrina we were in meetings this morning.

So here's my statement. And I hope in the course of Don Payne, you'll answer.

One: I am committed to--and let me acknowledge the very esteemed members of this panel, and the history of my opposition to the war--but I am committed to reason. And that is that I don't want to disrupt the area. But your voices are needed with ours for a plan--an absolute plan.

When 70 percent of the National Guard of Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana are in Iraq, then their true purposes of domestic tranquility or enforcement are lacking. I might offer to say that Katrina was made worse because the National Guard were absent. People were victimized worse because they were absent.

And so, with the killings of the last 48 hours, I would hope that we would come out of this process and hearing with the commitment to a plan now, and not allow the Administration to continue to ignore the devastation of death, the inability of the government to work, the depredation of rights of Iraqi people, and the disruption of the area--because we don't have a plan, not one that lets people out of--or tips people off that we're going but, in fact provides us with a reasonable response to those who want us to go now, and a reasonable response to our responsibilities to our soldiers and to democracy in the reason.

And I thank you, Madam, for allowing the commas not to be put in place.

Thank you.

CONGRESSWOMAN WOOLSEY: Thank you.

Before Donald Payne speaks--General Hoar has to leave at 1:30 for an airplane. So don't anybody feel badly if he leaves us.

So now--our clean-up batter: Donald Payne, New Jersey.

CONGRESSMAN PAYNE: Thank you very much. Let me say it's a pleasure. Ms. Woolsey. You've done an outstanding job. I won't take it personally. Usually when I start speaking people leave, in general, anyway.

[Laughter.]

So you didn't have to give me an excuse.

Let me thank Ms. Woolsey for calling this ver important hearing--and also commend Ms. Lee and good friend Chairman here, the Dean, and all of the folks who have been involved in this issue.

Let me just say quickly that we in New Jersey lost 700 people on 911 in the World Trade Center. It was very personal to us: out of the 2,800 people that died. We were out to get Osama bin Laden. He went on television. He said, "I did it. I'm in Pakistan. Al Qaeda's the one."

Our President got on television and said that we're gonna hunt him down. We're gonna get him. We're gonna get Osama bin Laden because of what he did to us.

But then we saw a shift. We heard no more about Osama bin Laden after awhile. We had the entire world on our side. Every country, just about, said, "We're with you, U.S."

We let it all slip away.

What did we do? We decided to go to Iraq. We had Hans Blix, the inspector. Finally, Osama bin Laden said he knew he was bluffing. The world knew he was bluffing. He finally said, "Let's Hans Blix and these inspectors go anywhere they wanted to go--because he knew he had no weapons of mass destruction. That should have been the signal.

But rather than us having the inspectors go, we said no. They have to come out. We're going to get Saddam Hussein, because he has weapons of mass destruction, biological and chemical weapons, and we need to get him. And so we went in. Of course, we knew there were none of these weapons.

And so what happened then? It became "regime change." That was why we went in.

Osama bin Laden's still on the loose. Osama bin Laden is still recruiting. Osama bin Laden and Al Qaeda are stronger than ever. Osama bin Laden and the Al Qaeda people never before in Iraq, the Al Qaeda's are in Iraq. As a matter of fact, Al Qaeda and Osama bin Laden called Saddam Hussein an infidel just like the U.S. He didn't like him either. They tried to connect them. They met some time in Baghdad, they claimed. All lies.

And so we found ourselves in a place where the insurgents say we're going to kill as many people as we lose. And that was what those series of bombings were three days ago. They said we lost 80 or 90 up near the border where the U.S. is trying to close the border near Syria, so they're going to kill one for one. And about 150 people--some U.S., many Iraqis--were killed in the last two days with these bombs. Because now that's the new tactic.

They went into a place--17 people, tied them up. They had on Iraqi uniforms, but they were insurgents. And they simply executed these 17 people, just two days ago.

How in the world are we going to deal with this war that we had no business with. Osama bin Laden is the one that we needed to get, and we still need to get. And he's roaming around.

Let me just say that when you have this kind of tactic, it's not like old wars anymore. I think we saw it coming when, in the Falkland Islands someone just an arm propelled missile and hit a British destroyer 40 miles away and almost brought it down. That showed that tactics were changing.

We saw people go out in a little boat and put a bomb on one of our ships out in the Bay in--out in the Middle East--and it will come to me in a minute--brought our entire ship, put a big hole in it. Just

two or three people.

So these mighty weapons of war no longer work like they used to. And so there's a whole new tactic out there as we are trying to win this war that we are not winning at all.

Let me just conclude by saying that it's unfortunate that we may be getting back in to the same thing that we were in when the Cold War came. We said that we didn't care what you did to your people as long as you opposed communism. And so we had allies like Mobutu in Zaire, who murdered and killed and stole his own people's money. We had people like Sevimbe in Angola. F.W. DeKlerk was able to keep apartheid going in South Africa because he was anti-communist. It wasn't that he was killing and murdering Blacks because of their race, and apartheid lived until the late '80s. It was because they were our friends in the war against communism.

My fear--my question, perhaps--is: are we getting back into the same thing? Will it be that we will not for elections in Pakistan because Sharif is really our guy. He may not win an election, so we better leave that alone? Do we really want Mubarak out? He's against the militants, and if he has a real Democratic election, he may lose.

Even worse, a country that we've said genocide is going in--Sudan--where the Jsnjaweed have been unleashed by the government--Al Bashir government, which took over militarily also. They've allowed Osama bin Laden to stay in their country. We now have said we want to have relations--maybe diplomatic relations--because they say they're going to tell us something about where the terrorists are.

So my question is: how can we call it genocide and have our Secretary of State meet with the head of Sudan and say we're ready to open our embassy up again. We don't care that you're raping, maiming, killing Black Muslims in Darfur. But if you give us information, what you do--what happens in Darfur stays in Darfur, I guess. And we don't care about your policies.

Are we getting back to the F.W. DeKlerks and the Mobutus, and the people that we supported as a nation--not me, but our government? And are we going to say now we don't care about your policies at home, as long as you're with us on the war on terror?

That's my question.

CONGRESSWOMAN WOOLSEY: We're going to have Mr. Shallal.

MR. SHALLAL: You know, despite all these things, people all over the world love America, because they love what it stands for. The reason why I'm speaking here today, publicly, as an Iraqi--which is not--it's against my mother's wish, I have to admit--is because I believe in America.

And the very people that we were speaking about as far as Islamic fundamentalists from Iran, who we called the "axis of evil" a few years ago are the people that we are negotiating with right now, who are going to be put in power in Iraq--the allies of Iran, which we called the axis of evil a few years ago. It doesn't fall on deaf ears in Iraq that Saddam Hussein was in large part supported by the U.S.

So this is a cycle that seems to keep repeating itself.

And it's unfortunate, because it falls on the backs of people that are oftentimes the unfortunate--the poor, the oppressed, the young, women, and so on--who end up getting the brunt of the wrath of this leader that we tend to prop up.

So, from the way things seem--so far--and the way we've been conducting ourselves in Iraq, it doesn't look very hopeful that things are turning the corner; that things are going to get much better.

As it is now, Iraq will not be the democratic country that aspires to protect human rights, and respect the rule of law and all of that. But I think, you know, Iraqis still believe in America. And they still believe that America is there because it believes in human rights, it believes in the rule of law. It

may not act that way all the time. But they still believe in its values.

CONGRESSWOMAN WOOLSEY: Thank you. Thank you again everyone who's taken part in this important event today.

I particularly want to thank Congressman Conyers for putting together a model with his Downing Street hearings. I mean, believe me, we copied you every way we could. I don't believe in re-inventing the wheel when, indeed, you invented it. So--thank you very much.

I want to thank my staff for making this possible. They have really worked.

But especially, I'm grateful for the knowledge of our accomplished witnesses. You made strong, you made powerful presentations. You answered all of our questions and gave us many ways to think of this entire question. And you didn't all agree. And that was what we needed. And I thank you for that.

On the subject of timeliness--we should have been talking about this a long time ago, but we're talking about it now. And the deaths of more than 150 people yesterday in the bombings in Iraq, and more this morning--it just underscores the urgency of this conversation of the issues that we've talked about today.

There's a lot to digest from today's testimony. But it's about time these ideas got out on the table in a serious and organized forum. We never expected all of the answers to all of our questions, nor did we expect to emerge with one single coherent strategy.

Today was about bringing the discussion out into the open. It was about beginning to sketch a road map to peace in Iraq. Not about making a conclusive endorsement. Not about a single exit strategy--but about leaving Iraq, and leaving in the right ways.

So, I'll thank you again. I appreciate you so very much. You came, you stayed, you put up with us. And we appreciate you. You made this subject credible to the public. That is so important. And you made it credible to my colleagues--I know that for sure.

Before concluding this hearing I want to take a moment to again recognize Tom Hayden for helping me make this possible--and Tim Carpenter. Both of them are from the Progressive Democrats of America; and Paul Martin, from Peace Action. They have brought me thousands of petitions signed by Americans calling for a change in U.S. policy in Iraq.

I will be glad to make certain that these petitions get delivered to President Bush at the White House later today. And I'd like to thank you for being here, and ask you where those petitions are? I want them.

MR. CARPENTER: [Off mike.] [Inaudible.]

[Laughter.]

--for being here. I'd just like, just for a minute, because I think--[Inaudible.] Just as we held Congressman Conyers, 500,000 signatures on [Inaudible.] of what happened at Downing Street, we want to [Inaudible.] 25,000 signatures, because we don't want to wait years. We want to get us out of Iraq now.

We're going [Inaudible.] challenge you and encourage you [Inaudible.] come lead with us.

[Inaudible.] next Saturday, here in Washington, voters from--tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands of Americans are coming to Washington to meet here in the streets, and [Inaudible.] bases shut town.

And, just as we yesterday on the [Inaudible.] two votes [Inaudible.] Downing Street [Inaudible.]. And just as we stood with Congressman Conyers, [Inaudible.] mobilize in the streets, we

need your leadership [Inaudible.] and you challenged us and said, [Inaudible.] through Congress. [Inaudible.] just as you were today.

Get us out of this war. Bring our troops home. Let's rebuild America. Let's invest here. We thank you for your time and energy, and hope to see you in the park on the 24th.

MR. MARTIN: Yes, thank you very much.

Thanks for your time. We really appreciate you're doing it.

CONGRESSWOMAN WOOLSEY: Thank you very much.

Thank you for being such a patient audience.

[Applause.]

And the audience that listened in here today, thank you, thank you.

[Proceedings concluded at 1:44 p.m.]